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WITH

IMPRESSIONS OF

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TO THE REV. RUFUS ANDERSON, D. D.

My Dear Brother,

I feel that there is a propriety in connecting your name with this little volume.

Most of the objects and scenes which it describes, or to which it refers, we visited together; and in perusing its pages you will often be reminded of trains of thought which passed in conversation between us, during the nine months we were fellow travelers in foreign lands.

That tour, which made us companions in a deeply interesting, and not, I trust, unprofitable visit to our missionary stations in the Levant, I love to remember for this, among other reasons, that it endeared and cemented a friendship, commenced many years since between us, and which, I trust, will be consummated in a purer and better world.

That you and the beloved brethren associated with you, in conducting the affairs of our foreign missions, may long be preserved to devote your united counsels and efforts to the advancement of this great and good cause, is the fervent prayer of

Your friend and fellow laborer
In the gospel of our common Lord.

THE AUTHOR.

Hartford, June, 1845.

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PREFACE.

When it was determined, most unexpectedly to myself, that I should leave my people and my home on a visit to the East, in company with my now deceased daughter, and my beloved friend Dr. Anderson, it was my earnest desire and prayer, that I might make the interval of my absence as profitable to myself and others as possible. With this view, I resolved to keep my mind open to just impressions from all that I might see and hear in the lands I expected to visit. I wished to view the objects and scenes which might engage my attention, not merely with the eye of curiosity, or of one traveling for pleasure, but as a christian minister, that so I might turn the impressions I should receive, to the spiritual advantage of my beloved people, and the furtherance of the great objects of my ministry,

I was greatly interested in my journey,—it could not be otherwise;—the aspect of the countries I visited, the people, language, religion, manners and customs, were all so strange and so new. What was thus interesting to myself, I naturally concluded would also be interesting to my friends at home, though presented only in brief statement and outline. In this view, I have occasionally, since my return, delivered discourses, chiefly in the form of Sabbath evening lectures, designed to give my people some instructive idea of the scenes I passed through during the time I was absent from them. The discourses in this volume are a part of what I have attempted in this way. They were prepared, all except the last, with no intention of

publishing them. But as they were listened to with interest, and I trust, profit, by many who heard them, I have thought, in concurrence with the suggestions of judicious friends, that they might be useful, if more widely circulated in their present form. I have found no time to recast or to polish them since their first composition. I give them to the public, simply as containing a faithful representation of the impressions made on my mind, by my visit to the East, and in the hope that they may contribute somewhat to the gratification and instruction of those who may not be able to read larger and more critical works. I have made few allusions in this volume to the state of our missions in the East. The reason is, I have before communicated my views on this subject in a letter addressed to the Prudential Committee of the American Board in Boston, and also in a sermon I published soon after my return home.

Most of the facts and sentiments contained in the volume, are of course from my own observation. What I have derived from other sources has been adopted only on what seemed to me sufficient evidence; and I have not thought it necessary to indicate my authorities by numerous references in the margin.

For several facts contained in the first discourse, I am indebted to my much esteemed friend, the Rev. John Mitchell, late pastor of the Edwards church, Northampton. We met at Liverpool, and were fellow passengers in the steamer which conveyed us across the Atlantic. I remember with great satisfaction the many pleasant hours we spent, during the voyage, in communicating to each other the views we had been led to entertain of the countries we had visited. I derived much useful information from our intercourse; and I take this opportunity to say, that he has gathered, from his European tour, rich materials for a book of travels, which, I am happy to learn, may soon be ex-

pected from the press; and from what I know of his plan and his ability to execute it, I venture, beforehand, to promise the public, that they may expect from his pen, not a mere itinerary, but a work highly instructive and useful.

A few notes have been added, with some things contained in which, all may not be pleased, as they may not be with some things contained in the discourses. I make no apology. What I have written, I am sure, is in a spirit of kindness and charity towards all who hold the "Head," and regard the christianity, which is common to all true christians, as of more importance than any sectarian form of it. I could not forgive myself, and I should fear I could not be forgiven of my Master, if I should exclude from my fellowship those whom my Master loves and receives into communion with himself; and I am willing, on every suitable occasion, to bear testimony against this great evil. I would, that the sentiment once uttered by Robert Hall, were taken up and echoed from pulpit to pulpit through Christendom: "If there be one truth clear as the sun in heaven, it is this—there should be no terms of communion but what are terms of salvation; and the man who is good enough for Christ, is good enough for me."

The worst form of schism, and the most dangerous, is that which leads persons to separate themselves, and exclude others, from fellowship with that *only true Church*, which Christ has purchased with his own blood, and which, though existing here in different names and under different forms, he is preparing to present faultless before the throne of his glory. With all of every name, who belong to this Church, I wish to be united in fellowship and love; but with respect to all who separate from it, and so become schismatics, I feel constrained to say—"O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honor be not thou united."

OUR GOODLY HERITAGE.

The lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage.—PSALM 16: 6.*

PERHAPS no text of scripture occurred to my mind more frequently than this, during my recent tour in the East. As I passed through different lands, observing their natural position and resources, and the general state of society around me, as contrasted with that of my own country, I often exclaimed, Surely the lines have fallen to me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage. And grateful I trust for the many distinguishing blessings bestowed by a beneficent providence on this land of my birth and of my love, I repeatedly said to my companion in travel,—if ever I live to preach another thanksgiving sermon, this shall be my text. God has mercifully preserved

* Preached on the Anniversary Thanksgiving Nov. 28, 1844.

my life, and brought me to my home, and to my friends, and I meet you here to day, on this joyous anniversary, to execute a purpose, formed when I was more than five thousand miles from the spot most dear to me of any on earth.

The text was uttered by the pious king of Israel in special application to Judea, the land where he dwelt, and which God had distinguished by his favors above all other lands. It was a territory of very limited extent, being only one hundred and seventy miles in length from north to south, and seventy miles in its greatest breadth from east to west,—not twice as large as the state of Connecticut. On this small territory there once dwelt a numerous, powerful and happy people, more distinguished for their social and domestic comforts, and for their civil and religious institutions and privileges, than any other equal number of people on the earth. God acknowledged them as his people, and while they obeyed his laws and ordinances, he dwelt among them, their glory and defense, and poured upon them his blessings in rich profusion. The land in which they dwelt is described in the Bible as a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths

that spring out of the valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates, a land of oil-olive and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any good thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.* It was in the midst of this goodly scene, and while surveying the rich blessings enjoyed by him and his people, that the Psalmist, in pious gratitude for these blessings, was led to utter the sentiment in our text. The scene on which his eye rested with such grateful emotions, as comprising all the elements of a happy and prosperous state of society, has long since passed away; and as one travels over the land which was formerly so rich and so goodly a heritage of a numerous and happy people, his heart is filled with sadness, as he beholds the desolations and ruins that are every where spread around him. So barren, so dreary and waste is the general appearance of the country, that, but for the remains of ancient grandeur and prosperity that meet him on every side, the traveller would find it difficult to realize the description

* Deut. viii: 7–9.

given in the Bible of the fertility, plenty and general happiness, which once characterized the land and blessed its inhabitants. The hills and the valleys are indeed there, and the fountains and springs of water, and the beautiful, extended plains. But all else is changed. The people who once owned and tilled the soil are not there. The cities, towns and villages where they once lived, in the midst of their goodly heritage, are heaps of ruins. The terraced hills and mountains, once covered with the vine, the fig-tree and the olive, are now barren and waste; and on the plains and valleys, where once the shepherds of Israel tended their flocks, or the husbandman "shouted the harvest home," wandering Bedouins pitch their tents, or miserable Arabs toil in fear and oppression to gain a scanty and precarious subsistence. The inhabitants are few, poor and wretched; a dreadful curse seems to have descended on the land, and to have riven itself into the very rocks and soil of the country, so that no one now living there, would think of applying to himself the language of the text,—The lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage. And to no country that

I have seen can this language be applied with so much appropriateness and truth, as to that in which God has given us our home. My object in the sequel of this discourse, is to satisfy you of the truth of this assertion, by comparing, in several particulars, the advantages enjoyed in this land of our heritage, with those possessed by the people of other countries where it was my lot to travel during the last year.

My remarks will necessarily take a wide and somewhat miscellaneous range; and it cannot be expected, in the brief limits assigned to this service, that I should descend to any thing like minute detail or extended statement. My object will be gained if, by the general views I may present, I can awaken in your bosoms a deeper gratitude to God for his goodness, and leave you at the close under a stronger and more vivid impression of the truth, that the lines have fallen to you in pleasant places, and that you have indeed a goodly heritage.

We may ask, at the outset, what are the great, essential elements of a prosperous and happy community? They are a healthy climate, a productive soil, a homogeneous population, free

snstitutions, equal laws, the means of general education, and a pure religion. Now point me, if you can, to any country on the globe, where these elements exist in so great perfection, or in io happy combination, as in this land of our heritage? I know of no such country myself; and after all the means of observation I have enjoyed, I have a deeper impression than ever, that no such country is to be found, on the face of the earth. I know indeed that ALL good things are not enjoyed in any one country; they are not enjoyed in our own. But they exist here, I believe, in greater abundance and perfection, than any where else in the world.

1. Survey our natural resources. If the world now lay vacant, and "all before us where to choose," what part of the globe, of equal extent, would you prefer to the United States? Our territory is of great extent, capable of sustaining a population several times as large as that of all Europe; and yet without being crowded together as they often are there, in dense overgrown festering masses. There is ample room in our country, for the industry, enterprise and thrift of our spreading population. In the old world mul-

titudes are unemployed; there is no field spread out to call forth their energies; either there is a want of territory, or a want of encouragement for industry and effort; and idleness, poverty, and mendicity are the consequences; and with these, discontents, crimes and frequent revolts. Here we know but little of these evils. Industry finds ready employment and ample reward; and intelligent enterprise a boundless field for activity and effort. Our climate, it is true, is not as bland as that of Italy, nor as sunny as that of southern Greece, and many parts of Asia Minor and Syria; but it is quite as favorable for nourishing corporeal and intellectual life. No where have I seen people of finer form, or firmer muscle, or more vigorous, active frame, than in these northern climes of ours. And our soil, though it yields us neither the cane nor the coffee tree, nor allows the growth either of the vine, the fig, the olive or the orange, is still *sufficiently* fruitful under the hand of industry, to yield an abundant supply for all our wants. It is not the richest soil, nor the softest climate that nourishes the happiest and most enterprising population. The valley of the Nile is a perfect garden for richness of soil, and

for the variety and abundance of its productions; and there too you find the most idle, shiftless and miserable peasantry, perhaps, in the world. And the same, substantially, is true of many of the most fertile parts of Southern Europe, and Asia. We have, on the whole, abundant reason to be contented with the austere sky, and the comparatively hard, unyielding soil of this our New England heritage. They have produced us that which would not spring in the richest gardens of the East. The compact numbers and the strength; the general intelligence, virtue, public spirit, and thrift which characterize our population,—these are the products we boast, and they are such as are never found beneath a tropical sky, or where the earth yields her fruits as it were spontaneously.

> 'Man is the nobler growth our soil supplies,
> And souls are ripened in our northern skies.'

But if we take a wider view and look abroad over the vast territory embraced in our country, we find every variety of climate, soil and production; and for pleasantness, fertility, and abundance, not surpassed by any country on earth. Our border is washed, in its whole extent, by the

broad Atlantic, and indented by innumerable bays and harbors, studded with hundreds of rising cities and towns; while our interior is intersected by vast navigable rivers and lakes, which, for extent, are like seas;—and thus our whole country, embosoming resources immense, and as yet but partially employed, and spreading over a surface of about two millions of square miles, furnishes as De Toqueville has well said, the most magnificent dwelling place for man that is to be found on the globe.

And then for beauty and grandeur of natural scenery, I must say, I have seen nothing which will, on the whole, compare with what is exhibited in many parts of my own country. The mountains of Greece and Asia Minor are admired, and they are indeed interesting for their wild, ragged, precipitous appearance. Holding up their bald, naked, dreary aspect to the sky, they strike us for the novelty of their look, and for the historical associations connected with many of them. But there are mountainous scenes in our own country, and even in our own New England, which will vie with any thing of the kind I saw in the East. And for rivers, and valleys, and

wide, extended plains, the old world furnishes nothing that will compare with our own, either for extent, or beauty, or magnificence.

The scenery around Constantinople, including the sea of Marmora, the Bosphorus and its environs, is indeed of surpassing interest. I never beheld any thing more so. As you sail up the sea of Marmora and turn round Seraglio point, a scene of enchantment seems to open on your view. On the left is Constantinople proper, built on seven hills and crowned with an equal number of royal mosques, with their lofty domes and graceful minarets, topped with gilded crescents; and towers and palaces filling the vision. On the right is Scutari, rising gradually from the opposite shore of the Bosphorus, and skirted in its rear as far as the eye can reach, by a dark forest of cypresses, marking the principal burying ground of the Turks; while far off in the distance, tower the mountains of Asia Minor, backed by Olympus, who lifts his snow-capped head with hoary majesty above a breast of clouds. In front are Galata and Pera, situated on an eminence, rising abruptly from the water, and overlooking the harbor and the city; while the beautiful Bospho-

rus is seen stretching away towards the Black sea and lined on each side with towns and villages, and numerous palaces and kiosks of the Sultan and high officers of state. Around you is the shipping of various nations, displaying their different flags, and hundreds of graceful caiques, gliding in every direction through the water, as if impelled by instinct; while the Golden Horn, the most spacious and beautiful harbor in the world, as it winds around the city, and loses itself in the distance, displays before you the Turkish navy and arsenals in grand and imposing array. The whole scene is one of gorgeous and almost fairy appearance.

But there are two grand defects which mar and spoil the beauty of this, and in general, all the scenery in the East. The first is, it is outward, merely external. The moment you enter the city, and towns, and mingle with the people, the charm vanishes. You find yourself in the midst of narrow dirty streets, surrounded with filth, poverty and miserable degradation. The other defect is, the entire absence of what I call moral scenery. There are no christian churches, sending their spires towards heaven and assembling

the people for a pure worship; there are no schools, no institutions of learning, no free, happy, intelligent population; but ignorance, superstition, oppression and wrong, meet you on every side. Ascend any elevation in the vicinity of Boston, or on the banks of our own river, or on the shores of the Hudson; and you have spread out before you a scene, which if not in all respects so imposing in its natural aspect, is, on the whole, far more interesting and glorious than all the East can show; and it is so on account of the superior intellectual and moral associations. You behold in the landscape spread out before you, hundreds of happy villages and towns, a free intelligent population, and schools and churches and public edifices of various kinds, and all the countless privileges and blessings of civilization and christianity. It is these, after all, which impart the chief interest to a country; and in this view we may emphatically say, the lines have fallen to us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage.

2. Our position in reference to other nations, is one of great and very distinguishing advantage. Removed at a distance from the involved, jealous,

expensive, and easily disturbed policy of the European states, we are left, unchecked and unrestrained, to pursue our own system of government, to mature and perfect our own institutions, and work out our own destiny. The three united continents of the old world do not contain a single spot, where any grand scheme of human improvement, like that which is going forward in this country, could be attempted, with any prospect of success, because there is no spot safe from foreign interference. Every government in Europe and in Asia watches with a jealous eye the movements of every other government; and while the smaller states are continually thwarted and controlled in their policy, by the interference and intrigues of the larger, there is not one of them, that can put forth a movement towards freedom, or a change in the existing state of things for a better, but thousands of bayonets at once bristle around the discontented territory, and put down the rising spirit of reform. Hence large standing armies are kept up in all the countries of Europe and of the East. France has a standing army at this moment of four hundred thou-

sand men.* Russia has a larger number. England has ninety thousand, at home and abroad, besides her navy. Belgium has one hundred and twenty-five thousand, and Prussia one hundred and eighty thousand. Prussia is literally a nation of soldiers—every young man being obliged at the age of eighteen, to enter the army and serve three years uninterruptedly, without substitute, and then, occasionally, for a series of years more. All Europe is filled with soldiers, and so is Turkey and Syria. In travelling you meet armed men and the materials of war every where, and you can imagine better than I can describe, what effect this cultivation and display of the war spirit must have on the general character of the people and state of society.

In this country, we have in all, about seven thousand men in our national army, stationed at different points, chiefly for purposes of police, and the protection of our frontiers. And yet with this handful of men, scattered hundreds of miles from each other, in far distant sections of our land, we are much more secure against internal

* There are constantly in Paris about sixty thousand troops, and many more in its immediate vicinity.

insurrection, and foreign invasion, than any country in Europe or the East. Behind the mighty veil of waters on one side, and with no neighboring power in any quarter to disturb or make us afraid, we can hear, without alarm, of the jealousies and strifes, and of the revolutions and convulsions that shake the nations of the old world, and go on enlarging our cities, extending our commerce, multiplying our manufactures, and filling our land with the blessings of knowledge, religion, peace, and general happiness. Our position then in relation to the other nations of the earth, is one of immense importance. It is better for our safety, and for the success of our institutions, than the most powerful army or the strongest wall drawn round our entire territory.

3. Notice next our institutions, civil, literary and religious. These are all of the most free and popular character; and under their widespread influence our people enjoy a measure of safety and happiness, and of general intellectual and moral advancement, which falls to the lot of no other people on earth. There are, I know, many and great evils in our social state. Our fiery party spirit, our corrupt elections, our grasp-

ing avarice, our reckless ambition, our oppression and slavery, our bad faith and repudiation of just obligations,*—these are evils of great magnitude;

* When one hears the evils here referred to spoken of abroad, and tauntingly, as they often are, he feels them keenly; they make him hang his head. And yet there is not a country in Europe entitled to cast the first stone at us, on the ground of being free from them. Party spirit is quite as unprincipled and reckless in France and England, as it is with us. In respect to corruption and bribery in elections, we are as yet but mere novices in these bad practices as compared with either of the countries just named. For a candidate for a seat in Parliament to spend fifteen, twenty, thirty thousand pounds to secure his election, is, or was quite a common affair in England, and the practice is openly justified by public sentiment. As for slavery, it is evil, only evil, continually,—an unspeakable dishonor to our country, and a dreadful curse to our institutions. No one should ever offer the least apology for it, but do all he can for its removal. The doctrine of "repudiation," upon which the changes have been rung throughout Europe, to our great discredit, it is but right to say, has found very few advocates in this country. It has been openly and pointedly rebuked by all the leading public presses in the land, as a crime and a villany never to be tolerated. And though this odious doctrine has been extensively represented by foreigners, as the crime and disgrace of our whole country, it has in fact been avowed and acted upon, but by a single state, (Mississippi) and that in the case of a loan which the Legislature of that state believed to have been fraudulently contracted. A few of the

and were it not for the many redeeming qualities in our system, might well make us tremble for the future. But making all proper allowance for the evils of our social state, where will you go to find a better? No state of society is perfect in this world. Ours is not perfect. But where, I ask again, will you find a better? If you go to Turkey, you would, it is true, get rid of the inconveniences of frequent, popular elections. The Sultan would relieve you of that burden, for there he alone appoints to office; there, as a subject, you would hold your possessions and your personal liberty by the will of a Pasha or the Grand Seignior; and if you were suspected of having a little too much property, measures would be found to relieve you of a part or the whole of it, by squeezing it from you, as it is called, or by

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other states have temporarily failed to meet their engagements,—an evil deeply to be regretted, for this, among other reasons, that it sadly dishonors our free institutions in the view of foreigners, and tends mightily to uphold the advocates of arbitrary power. I always took the ground, when conversing abroad on the subject, that every dollar, both of principal and interest, would finally be paid; a conviction which has been continually gaining strength since my return to my country.

dropping your head at the door of your own house. In France, out of thirty-three millions of people, only about two hundred thousand persons have the right of suffrage; not one elector to one hundred and sixty of the population; and there, half the population cannot read, and more than half cannot write. In England, the electoral franchise has, since the Reform Bill was passed, been somewhat extended, but is still extremely limited; confined to a very small portion of the people. But I have yet to learn that the government there is more pure, or elections less controlled by bribery and fraud, or the mass of the people more intelligent, contented and happy, than in your own country. If you wish to get rid of the fickleness of popular government, and live under one more stable and firm, you may be gratified to your hearts content, by removing to Austria, or to the Pope's dominions, or best of all, to the kingdom of Sardinia, or of Naples. In the capital of this last kingdom, out of three hundred and fifty thousand people, two hundred and fifty thousand know absolutely nothing of letters, and schools are prohibited by law, and gross superstition and beggary and misery reign on every side.

You may find, in many parts of the old world, a more quiet and settled state of public affairs than is enjoyed in your own country; but with this advantage, if it be one, you must take despotism in all its haughtiness, oppression and crimes; and church establishments, with all practicable degrees of intolerance and other abuses, from Rome down to the Church of England and the Scotch Kirk—all sufficiently illiberal and oppressive towards dissenters. And with these no *slight inconveniences*, you must live where there is no system of common schools, as in your own country,—this applies especially to England—and no colleges accessible to all the people, but only to certain privileged classes; and no broad open field of enterprise where talents of every grade and every calling may find free scope and full employment. No, my friends, the privileges here adverted to, are no where so generally and so perfectly enjoyed as in our land. This is the home of liberty. Here is enjoyed freedom of thought and action. Here the mind has room and motive for expansion and activity. Here the field of honorable industry and enterprise is open to all; the means of knowledge and religion are widely

diffused among the people, and rarely indeed, especially in this part of our country, is an individual to be found who cannot read and write, and thus have access to the multiplied sources of information around him.

There is room in our country for that class of society called the people; the middling class, the owners, the freeholders of the soil, the nerve, the sinew and strength of a country. In the old world such a class can hardly be said to exist. *There*, it is the nobility and the populace; the aristocracy and the common herd; and what the populace is, whether in Asia or Europe, it is hardly possible for any one to conceive, who has not seen them in their extreme ignorance, degradation and poverty. This debased, abject, dark minded mass, are the great strength of despotic and priestly power. They cannot sympathize with any intelligent scheme of reform or revolution; and exist, to a great extent, in what may almost without a figure, be called the cattle-state.

No where else, I believe in the world, is woman admitted to her proper place in society, or treated with so much honor and respect, as in this country. In Turkey she is shut up in the Harem,

and excluded from all social and public intercourse with the other sex. In Syria she is a beast of burden, a slave. In Italy, Switzerland and other parts of Europe, as I have often seen, she labors promiscuously in the fields, and on the highways, and in all kinds of toil, with men, and exhibits all the marks of degradation and coarseness which might be expected to result from such employment. How different is it here? Educated, intelligent, refined, filling her own proper sphere, and discharging her own proper duties, she is treated as a companion, counsellor and friend, and her influence is widely and powerfully felt in all the relations of life. This is a great matter, and it is one of the many rich and peculiar blessings which flow to us from our free institutions.

4. I may notice, in passing, our homogeneousness of population and language, as constituting an advantage, in our favor, of great importance. We are substantially one people, sprung from one stock, and that the Saxon stock, by far the most bold, intelligent, free, enterprising and fast growing, of any on earth. Travel where you will in our country, you find yourself among essen-

tially the same people, speaking the same language, having the same general habits and manners, and loving and cherishing the same institutions. Here are no barriers to intercourse and influence, growing out of diversity of language, or old established castes and privileged orders of society. Strike a chord in one part of our country, and you cause a vibration through every other. Write an article for a newspaper, or publish a book worthy of notice, and it will circulate, in a few weeks, through the twenty-six states of the Union, and be read by hundreds of thousands in all parts of the land. Or set in motion any good influence, and it at once draws around it sympathizing hearts, and goes on producing its results, on a constantly widening sphere, from generation to generation. The importance of this peculiarity in our situation, I never felt as I did, when traveling abroad. In the East, society exists in a broken, fragmentary state. It is composed of people of many different nations, speaking different languages, and having different manners, interests and religions. Enter the city of Smyrna,—and the same is true of other large eastern cities—and you would think you had

around you *samples* of all the confused people and tongues of Babel. In Constantinople, it is said, there are fifteen languages spoken by large masses of people residing there; and on board the steamer in which I went from Smyrna to Beirut, there were persons from twenty-one different nations. This creates great impediments in the way of intercourse and influence, and is indeed one of the most discouraging elements in the organization of Eastern society. There is no oneness of language, of character, interest and aim, among the people. They are divided and kept asunder by innumerable repellent influences, and nothing can bring them together, in intercourse and coöperation, but the prevalence among them of the pure spirit of the gospel, and this meets with a formidable barrier in the heterogenous character of the people just alluded to.

We have, it is true, people from different nations in our own country. But they are comparatively few; they are lost in the mass of the native born inhabitants; and if we are wise and just to give them our knowledge and our religion, they will soon melt into the common mass, and

their influence and their interests will be identified with those of our own people.

5. As another peculiar advantage of our country, I mention our essential harmony of political opinions. I may not, in this remark, carry along with me the assent of my hearers. But it is I think founded in truth. We have parties, I know, and, too often, they war upon each other with well nigh as much earnestness and zeal, if not with as much good temper, as our fathers exhibited in the achievement of our independence; and sometimes, when witnessing the conflict, and the various tactics resorted to by the combatants, one cannot but wish, that they would stop and inquire what they are quarrelling about—a question, I am sure, which many of them at least, on both sides, would be quite unable to answer.

I do not say that the matters about which the parties in our country differ are of no importance. Some of them I know are of much importance, and I hold my own views respecting them. Still they are not, on either side, *fundamental*. They respect measures, not first principles; courses of policy, not the form of our government, or the

spirit of our constitution. We are not all of one political creed, do not all vote alike at the polls; but we are all republicans; the friends of popular liberty and of free institutions; and any man or class of men, who should avow sentiments hostile to these institutions, or wish essentially to change the form of our government, would at once be visited with the indignation of all parties.

But it is not so in Europe. There politics are divided on fundamental principles; gulfs separate them, as wide as democracy is from monarchy, and legitimacy or loyalty from rebellion. In France, for example, there are legitimists; the friends of Louis Philippe; and the republicans. The success of either of the contending parties would be, not the change of the policy of administration, but the overthrow of the government, and anarchy and bloodshed would be involved in the process. So of England. There are parties there, which, if they should gain the ascendency, would subvert the whole established order of things, and introduce an entirely new form of government and administration. The same is true of most of the governments of Europe. They are not well adapted to the progress of society.

They involve great abuses and oppressions, and large masses of the people are ready for revolution. Italy would be revolutionized to-morrow, and every government there overturned, if Austrian vigilance and power did not prevent. The ground heaves fearfully in many parts of the continent, and the rumbling of the earthquake is heard ever and anon, giving direful portent of disaster and change in the breaking up of old institutions, and the coming in of a new order of things.

How different is the state of things in this country! Our people wish for no change in fundamental principles, no subverting of the constitution and form of our government; with these they are well satisfied and desire to see them preserved and perpetuated to the latest posterity; and if the infatuating, blinding spirit of party could be allayed, and a little of concession and candor be exercised on both sides, there would, I fully believe, be not only harmony, as to the essential principles of our government, but harmony also, as to the measures which should be adopted in administering the government, and promoting the general prosperity of the nation.

6. Traditional influence in our country is small, and what there is, is good. Our ancestors were wise, intelligent, christian men. They feared God and lived for posterity. Far in advance of the age to which they belonged, they broke away from the old, corrupt, oppressive institutions and usages of Europe, and came here to lay the foundation of a new order of society, more free, more equal, more just, than the world ever before saw. And under the smiles of God's favoring providence, their undertaking was completely successful. The fruits of it we are enjoying at this day, and they are wide spread and abundant throughout our country. We feel that the memory of our fathers is blessed, and the influence that emanates upon us, through the medium of their institutions and sentiments, is all of a salutary, elevating, ennobling character. We are here trammeled with no hereditary, prescriptive, time-hallowed abuses. We have no arrogant nobility; no entailments; no hereditary lawmakers; no established church; no privileged class of clergy or laity; in fine, none of the feudalism of by-gone, barbarous ages. The world has not outlived the genius of our institutions, as it

has in Europe. The traditions and usages of the dark ages hold mighty sway in the old world. There, society, in regard to its structure and machinery, is extremely complicated; "of various dates," like a house patched and altered at sundry times, but never thoroughly remodeled or rebuilt, so as to be adapted to the genius and progress of improvement. Many things, foreign to its original plan, have been forced in by circumstances, as light and the popular spirit, or the assertion of human rights have advanced, which are like new cloth upon old garments, threatening disastrous rents. Reform in such a state of things is difficult and hazardous, because it is at the same time revolutionary and subversive. In England, for example, there are several single elements in the social state, to change any one of which, in the way of national reform, would be deeply revolutionary. To give a case, the separation of church and state would change the constitution of Parliament; it would overturn the bench of bishops in the house of Lords, and sweep away whole shoals of indolent, pleasure-loving, beneficed clergy. Abolish entailments, or the law of primogeniture, and the immense, over-

grown estates of the nobles and the privileged orders would change hands, and the house of Lords would become another thing, as has been the case in France, and many existing relations in society would be broken up. These great measures, among others, seem exceedingly desirable; and yet their consequences would not stop short of revolutionizing the entire political and social fab ic.

In our country the case is entirely different. The frame of our government is simple. It did not grow up from tradition; it is not the product of feudalism or of the dark ages. It was formed by intelligent, far-reaching, patriotic men, chosen for the purpose by the people, and acting for the people in the whole process of their deliberations and decisions. Hence the simplicity, plainness and consistency which mark our constitution of government, and which render it so comparatively easy to reform any abuse, or effect any change which may be demanded for the better working of the whole. Our political system is like a very simple machine. You can take out or put in a wheel without stopping, or in the least embarrassing its general movements. Whereas the

European systems consist of so many thousand parts and are all so interlocked and dove-tailed together, that to remove or to alter any one part deranges the whole, and of course reform must be extremely slow and difficult.

In our system too of distinct states and minor communities, instead of one consolidated general government, we enjoy advantages of which, I think, we are by no means duly sensible. The system of consolidated, general government prevails throughout Europe and the Eastern world. And there liberty languishes and dies, and tyranny, oppression and wrong find their proper home. France attempted a *consolidated* Republic. It became a hell, the fires of which spread over all Europe, and it cost the blood of many millions of her people to extinguish the flame.

In our country the powers of the general government are circumscribed, confined chiefly to the single object of securing the common rights, and protection of the several states, composing the Union. The states are, in fact, the only real sovereignties known to our system. And here in our little state of Connecticut, safe under the broad shield of the Union, we are free to pursue

whatever system of legislation or internal improvement we may deem best adapted to promote the general prosperity of our people. Our interests are all under our eye and in our own hands; and it is for us, as a state, to take care of and advance them. If any member of the Union, as South Carolina, or Rhode Island, in its madness and folly, breaks out into insurrection and rebellion, we need not be disturbed by it, but leave the fire to be extinguished in the territory where it began.

But I must close. And, now my friends, as you look over this good land in which you dwell, and survey its mighty resources, its free institutions, its countless blessings, social, civil, literary and religious, which pour around you like the light of heaven, does not the sentiment rise warm and grateful from every heart,—the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage?

And is not gratitude to God our first duty in view of the goodly heritage which he has given us? He preserved it of old for our fathers; he cast out the heathen and gave them possession of it; he enabled them to plant it with the rich

germs of all our most precious institutions; to defend it in the midst of wars and perils, and to transmit it to us, their children, as at this day, an inheritance, richer and more abundant in all the blessings, that make life desirable and happy, than is enjoyed by any other people under heaven. All, all comes to us from the kind providence of God. How natural then the feeling, and how reasonable—what shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits? I will take the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay him my vows of thanksgiving and praise in the presence of all the people.

This is our first, but it is not our only duty. Great responsibility lies upon us, in relation to the future. The rich inheritance which, through the toils and prayers and sufferings of our fathers, God has transmitted to us, their descendants, is not for us alone. We are bound in gratitude for the past, and in duty to the future, to transmit it to our posterity; to hand it down unimpaired to bless those who are to come after us. Many dangers, it cannot be concealed, threaten our prosperity. I may not attempt to enumerate them now. But he must be blind and insen-

sible indeed, who feels no apprehension at the evils which are working themselves into our social system, corrupting the sources of power, weakening the energies of government and making its administration more and more, a mere instrument of promoting the objects of party strife and selfish ambition. The things here adverted to cannot, it seems to me, go on much further, without sapping the foundations of our institutions and shivering the Union to atoms. There are measures now in contemplation by some of our politicians, which, if allowed to be consummated, must, I greatly fear, bring about this disastrous result. There are already in our social system as many causes of division and disunion, as we know well how to get along with, and he must be a rash, inconsiderate man, to say nothing worse, who would knowingly add to these causes. One cannot think or speak with patience, of extending the slave power in this country, of strengthening the slave influence in our general government, or of perpetuating that accursed influence over the free states of the North. Bring Texas into the Union; a foreign independent state,—a thing never contemplated by our constitution,—a state too in

which slavery is sworn to be eternal, and which is designed, as a great mart, to be filled up with human cattle from the South!* Why should that be desired? Have we not territory enough? What good can come of it? The measure is evil, only evil, and if effected, it will be found to be evil continually, I fear, until we are destroyed. May God in his mercy avert from us so great a calamity. However divided we may be on other subjects, there should be but one opinion among good men on this subject; and no measures should be left unemployed to defeat the counsels of those who may wish to consummate so great a wickedness, or bring into the Union so terrible an element of discord and dissolution. Let us take our country as it is, and endeavor, in every possible way, to make and to keep it united, prosperous and happy. The eyes of the world are upon us.

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* The measure here referred to has, since the delivery of the discourse, been consummated, in so far as the approval of our general government is concerned. But Texas is not yet a part of the Union. Possibly a kind providence may yet defeat the counsels of our rulers and prevent a connection which, we have every reason to apprehend, will draw after it most disastrous consequences.

We are as a city set upon a hill. Other nations behold and wonder and imitate. The influence of our great example of popular institutions and free government is felt to the ends of the earth; and if successful in time to come, as it has been in time past, it will rapidly wake up a spirit of reform among all nations, and hasten on the reign of universal freedom and justice and right. Never did the desire for the growing prosperity of my country beat so strong in my bosom as when I was traveling in foreign lands. There I saw and felt by contrast the value of free institutions, and the blessings of a pure, unfettered christianity. I saw too how our movements were all watched and scanned; our virtues commended and our faults blazoned abroad. It is true, my friends, the eyes of the world are upon us. Our school system, in Connecticut, is referred to, and commented upon, with applause, in the British Parliament. Our Prison discipline is discussed and held up for imitation in the French Chamber of Deputies. Our free form of government and our popular institutions are known and talked of in Greece, in Constantinople and still further East. And our faults, our mobs, our bad faith,

our repudiation and slavery are marked and published at Naples, in a little miserable government paper that sheds only darkness upon the people. Let us see to it then, that our great example fail not, and that all the influence emanating from it be good, serving to cheer and to guide the nations to a freer and happy state. Let us *love* our country, our *whole* country, and not, exclusively, any one party in it. Let us *pray* for our country. It is of God to defend and prosper us. He it is that setteth up and plucketh down; and no policy or might can prevail in neglect or contempt of him. Let us admit no new elements of discord and disunion into our country, and put out the old ones as fast as we can. Let us especially send the blessings of the gospel, the means of knowledge and religion throughout the length and breadth of our land, as the great means of our safety and prosperity.

I have said, and I repeat the remark here, as what I firmly believe, that the salvation of our country is the hope of the world. If we fail in our great experiment of free institutions, the sun dial of time will go back for centuries, and despotism and superstition will hold a grand jubilee

over all the world. But if the salvation of our country is the hope of the world, it is equally true, that the christianity of the Bible is the hope of our country. All other means of security and prosperity without this will be found utterly unavailing. There is no truth in morals more certain than this, that a Bible christianity is the only palladium of a free government. It was for the want of this grand, conservative principle, that all the republics that have gone before us, decayed and died. Let all then who truly love their country, who prize this their goodly heritage, and would transmit it to those who are to live here when they are gone, see to it, that they be not wanting in faithful, persevering endeavors to send the christianity of the Bible into all the wide spread, destitute portions of our land. America is God's last dispensation towards our world. This act passed, the scene closes, the curtain of time drops, and the glories of eternity are revealed.

With grateful hearts then, my friends, retire from the house of God to your homes of comfort, peace and plenty. And when you find yourselves in the midst of your families, around the festive board, spread with the bounties of a kind

providence, let the sentiment rise warm and grateful to heaven—truly the lines are fallen to us in pleasant places; yea, we have a goodly heritage. And while the hand of God is thus acknowledged in your blessings, let him have this, the only return he asks, or you can render, a cheerful, unreserved consecration of all to his service and glory.

Some of us will remember to day loving and beloved ones who were wont to be with us on other occasions like the present, but now are here no more. Let us think of them, as engaged in higher and nobler services of thanksgiving and praise in the heavenly world; and let us be cheered by the assurance that if we are the friends of God, the time is not distant when we shall join them in that better state of being, and sing forever the song of Moses and the Lamb.—Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

PAUL ON MARS HILL.

PAUL ON MARS HILL.

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill, and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription,—To THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.—ACTS 17: 22, 23.

No man ever visited Athens with such feelings and views, or left such impressions on the minds of its inhabitants as did the Apostle Paul. He went there a servant of Jesus Christ, a solitary one among dense masses of mad idolaters, having the knowledge of the only living and true God, and able to point out the way of life revealed in the gospel. His visit appears to have been rather accidental and transient, occasioned by the persecution he had received from his enemies at Berea, and lasted only a few weeks. But his time, while there, instead of being spent in surveying the wonders of genius and art with which the city abounded, was wholly occupied in his favorite work of publishing the

gospel, and striving to turn the people from dumb idols to the service of the true God.

To give some order to our discourse, let us,

I. Consider the circumstances and conduct of Paul while at Athens.

II. The situation and character of the audience to whom he preached on Mars Hill.

III. The principal topics of the discourse he delivered on that occasion.

IV. The effects produced by it.

I. Though Athens, when visited by the Apostle, had lost something of its former grandeur, it was still the light of Greece and the glory of the gentile world. It was the seat of art, of learning, of eloquence, and of refinement and luxury in all their most inviting and captivating forms. The city was of great extent, surrounded by a massive wall of hewn stone, sixteen miles in circumference, and so wide that carriages could easily pass each other on the top. Within this vast area, was concentrated all that could please the eye, gratify the taste, excite the imagination, or minister instruction and improvement to the mind. In the midst was the Acropolis, the glory of Grecian art, the depository of the most splendid productions of human genius, in painting,

sculpture and architecture,—crowned with the glorious Parthenon and several other temples of surpassing magnificence and beauty, the ruins of which continue, to this day, to excite the admiration and wonder of all that behold them.

Thither scholars, and statesmen, and men of opulence and leisure were accustomed to resort from every part of the world for the gratification of their curiosity, or for perfecting themselves in the various departments of knowledge which they wished to cultivate. Paul's visit there was for a higher and a nobler object; and it does not appear from any thing contained in the sacred narrative, that he spent any time in surveying the various monuments of art, the remains of which are so interesting to travelers at the present day. Not that he was indifferent to these objects, or was incapable of duly appreciating their magnificence and splendor. Paul was a scholar and a man of taste. But he was absorbed in matters of higher interest. His heart was influenced with the love of Christ; his eye was fixed on the grandeur of eternity, and he was actuated, every where and supremely, with the one great purpose of making known the power and glory of Christ, that so he might be an instrument of salvation to perishing men. Hence,

the first thing we hear of him, after his arrival in Athens, was, that his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. He was moved with grief and indignation to see how the one only living and true God was forgotten and despised in the midst of this city of science and refinement, and the inhabitants prostituting their noble powers in the worship of dumb idols. And true to the great purpose of his life, he set himself forthwith to the work of reformation, and began to dispute, or to reason with all whom he met, on the great subject of truth and duty, of religion and salvation. He did not hesitate to take his stand in the market place, or place of public resort, and to lift up his voice in the hearing of the multitude in favor of God and against their idolatry. He soon produced a stir around him. His deep seriousness, his bold declarations of truth, his entire sincerity and earnestness, together with the weight of argument and faithful appeal which attended every thing he said, would not allow those who heard him to be indifferent to his discourses, or treat with neglect his solemn exhortations and warnings. Accordingly, he soon drew around him, not only the common people, but men of distinction, and philosophers

of various sects. At first, it would seem, they began to treat him with levity and ridicule, calling him a babler, a scatterer of vain words ; and not being able to comprehend his doctrine, or disposed to misrepresent it, they charged him with being a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection. This was a serious matter, as the charge involved a crime, which, according to the laws of the state, was punishable with death. They therefore took Paul, whether on the direct charge of blasphemy, or only that he might more fully explain his views and be examined before the proper judges, does not appear; but they took him and brought him to the court of Areopagus, before whom cases affecting the religion of the state were wont to be tried.

This high court of Athens was held on the top of Mars Hill, on a rocky space, open to the sky, and so near the edge of the craggy, precipitous face of the hill, that no building or obstacle of any kind could have intervened to prevent the view around, either of the city or the Acropolis. Up this hill Paul was conducted from the Agora or market place, where he had been disputing, by a flight of steps, cut in the rock, and which

remain to the present time. As he ascended into the presence of his judges, surrounded by the Epicureans and Stoics who had encountered him, and a multitude of listeners, anxious to hear his defense, Paul, we cannot doubt, rejoiced in heart, at the opportunity given him by his divine Lord, of declaring his love for his name, and of testifying against the superstition and idolatry of the city. He knew who it was that had said,—When they bring you before magistrates and councils, take no thought how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall say. Confiding in *his* protection and aid who had spoken these precious words, the Apostle calmly mounts into the august presence of his judges, and stands unmoved in the midst of a vast and mixed assembly. Let us,

II. In the second place, contemplate the character and situation of this assembly, and Paul's condition, as called to testify in their presence the gospel of the blessed God. Never was there a more interesting audience addressed by man; never was there a man called to address an audience in circumstances of more deep and solemn interest. *There* was the high court of the Athe-

nians, which had existed for ages, composed of a large number of the first characters of the city, usually thought to be fifty-one, and held in the greatest veneration for wisdom and authority, by all the Greeks and by other nations. There too were collected philosophers, statesmen, orators, poets, heroes and sages, not only from Athens, but from all parts of Greece and from other distant countries. With these were assembled a multitude of people of different callings and stations in society, drawn thither to witness the conduct of the Apostle before this collection of great and distinguished men, and to hear him explain further those new and deeply interesting truths, on which he had insisted in his more private discussions in the market place. I speak thus of the audience on Mars Hill, because it is most evident, that, during the short time the Apostle had been in Athens, he had excited a general attention to his doctrines among all classes of people, who would now throng to hear him speak before the high court of the nation, which had authority, among other things, to take cognizance of all matters pertaining to the public religion. Here then they were convened, a vast and mixed assembly, collected from all parts of

Greece, holding conflicting views of philosophy and religion, all addicted to idolatry, and all alike ignorant of the true God and of the way of salvation by Christ.

Paul stands in the midst of them, a solitary one in all the vast and mingled crowd, who had in his bosom the knowledge of the true religion, and could make known the way of pardon and life,—himself permitted to address them this once on subjects of eternal moment, ere he should meet them before the bar of final judgment. His situation was indeed deeply solemn and critical. His audience was such as might awe an ordinary man, especially when it is considered, that those before whom he was to speak, had the power of life and death, and were peculiarly jealous of all attempts to innovate on the established religion. On this very spot, and before this very court, Socrates, whose prison was in sight, had, four hundred years before, been arraigned and condemned for alleged innovation in religion, and contempt of the gods. Then, the scene around, how deeply interesting and imposing! He stood in the midst of Mars Hill, in the very centre and on the highest tower of judicial power and of gentile religion and philosophy; and his audience,

as we have said, was composed of that august court, and of others, senators, statesmen, philosophers, professors and students of various learning. Before him, separated by a slight valley, rose the Acropolis, crowned by the glorious Parthenon, dedicated to the goddess Minerva, whose glittering spear, poised above its top, gave warning to all to beware how they offended against the power of Athens. On the right was the Pnyx or forum, where the people were wont to assemble, to deliberate and to be addressed by their statesmen and orators. On the left, at a little distance on the plain, stood the temple of Theseus, itself a perfect model of architectural symmetry and beauty, and a little further on, in the same direction, was the Academy of Plato, and the Lyceum of Aristotle, which were regarded with the greatest veneration, as the very fountains of wisdom and science. At a little remove to the southeast of the Acropolis, stood in lonely and awful grandeur, the temple of Jupiter Olympus, and all around, on every hand, were to be seen the proud monuments of Athenian art and genius,—the whole embosomed in an amphitheatre of hills and mountains of exceeding beauty, open only at the west, where at the distance

of some five or six miles, but in plain sight from Mars Hill, lay the harbor of the Piræus, presenting a view of the various islands in the Ægean sea, with the navy and shipping of Athens. Such was the scene, in the midst of which Paul stood, on the occasion referred to in our text; altogether the most sublime and interesting that can be conceived; at least, so it seemed to me, when on a beautiful Sabbath in the close of last November,* I stood on this same spot, and read over the narrative on which we are now meditating. I could easily imagine, with all the localities around me distinctly marked, that I could see the great Apostle, surrounded by the temples of idolatry and the numerous monuments of art, standing up in the midst of his august audience, in calm christian dignity, and preparing to address them on the great themes of judgment and mercy, of God and salvation. Let us then pass to notice,

III. Some of the topics on which he insisted in the discourse he delivered on the occasion we are considering. An outline of it is contained in the chapter from which our text is taken; and whoever studies it, with any degree of attention, cannot but be struck with its peculiar appro-

*1843.

priateness, and with the grand and weighty character of the truths which it contains.

The Apostle, aware of the delicate and very critical position he occupied, sets himself first to conciliate the kind and candid feelings of his audience. Ye men of Athens, he says, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. This language, in our translation, sounds harsh. It might be rendered—I perceive that ye are exceedingly addicted to the worship of invisible powers. For, as I passed by and beheld your devotions, I saw an altar with this inscription,—To the unknown God. This, with admirable skill, he chose for his text; for while it introduced the very subject on which he intended to discourse, it shielded him from the charge of wishing to bring forward any new god or object of worship. In the strange and blind addictedness of these Athenians to the worship of lord's many and god's many, they had erected an altar to one, of whose character, being, or even name, they had no certain knowledge. They could not therefore justly complain of the Apostle, or charge him with innovating upon the popular theology, if he should explain to them the character and ways of that unknown being to whom they had

erected an altar. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. He was not among Jews, but among gentiles who had no divine revelation; and he met them, as he must, on the ground of natural religion, and led them to contemplate, as their first lesson, the being and perfections of the one only living and true God. This is the beginning, this the foundation of all true religion; and plain and familiar as is this great, fundamental truth to us, it was wholly unknown to the wisest of the Athenians, who, with all their boasted philosophy and learning, needed to be taught the very first elements of religious knowledge.

With singular propriety then did the Apostle begin with saying—Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship him declare I unto you. It is not easy for us to conceive with what deep and intense interest this annunciation would be listened to by those whom Paul addressed—himself all earnest, serious, as speaking in the presence of that God, whose character he would declare, and to beings who, he knew, must soon die and pass to the judgment. And the annunciation was followed by a strain of definite, majestic, simple truth, in regard to the supreme, all-perfect and reigning God, such as

they had never heard from the wisest and most eloquent of their philosophers; such as could not have been found in all the pages of Plato; such as could not have been gathered indeed from the concentrated wisdom of all their teachers from the earliest ages, and compared with which their whole speculations were but an abyss of darkness and absurdity.

God that made the world, and all that is therein, Lord of heaven and earth. What a sublime announcement was this? It was like a sun shot into chaos, and it put to flight in a moment all the vain speculations of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers about atoms, and contingencies, and floating forms of matter, and elementary principles from eternity. Then the announcement was so reasonable, it carried its own demonstration along with it. The world, with some of its loveliest scenery of sky and sea, mountain, valley and plain, was before the Apostle and his audience, like a transparent panorama; and the bright heavens seemed to echo the sentiment, and repeat it like a vast intelligence. For the first time in their lives the Athenians heard it; and its sublimity can be fully felt only

by those who have traced the wanderings of unassisted reason, and the deep chaos of heathen speculation respecting God and the creation. Then the unity of God—how must that have seemed, when announced in the face of a system that numbered thirty thousand deities in its catalogue? The Apostle proceeded. God that made the world and all that is therein, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Here is asserted the supreme creatorship of Jehovah; and also the omnipresence and spirituality of his nature. This was a new truth to the Athenians, and it must have pealed upon their hearing as a voice from the bosom of eternity.

To feel the full force with which this great spiritual truth would strike the minds of Paul's auditors, one needs to stand on the summit of Mars Hill, and have a clear view of the scene in which he uttered it. Before him was the Parthenon, and within it and the temples around it, were enshrined the forms of gods many and lords many; and there the priests of idolatry in their splendid robes, and crowds of devotees were wont daily to pay their worship, in gorgeous rites and costly sacrifices. The Apostle, stretching forth his hand and glancing his eyes over these proud

structures, which rose, in imposing magnificence and glory, before and around him, exclaimed,—*God dwelleth not in these*, and all the services performed there by men's hands, are in his sight vain and worthless. He, the infinite Being, the Maker, Possessor and Sovereign of the universe, is not limited in his presence or his abode to temples of human erection, however magnificent; neither is he worshiped by outward rites and ceremonies, however costly. He is the independent, every where present, all perfect and reigning God, and needeth nothing of man, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things. This was a startling truth, and in the position in which it fell from the lips of the Apostle, it was like a vivid flash of lightning across the infidel serenity of the surrounding scene, revealing at once the falsehood of the whole system of idolatry, and the emptiness of all worship paid in idol temples.

Having thus in this unheard of strain, asserted the being, perfections, and absolute independence of God, the Apostle proceeds to declare his sovereign providence, extending to all nations, creatures and events; the common relation of all men to him as their original Father and rightful

Disposer, and to one another as his offspring and of one blood; their common dependence on him for life and breath and all things; their common obligations to love serve and glorify him; his determining the bounds of their habitations and ordering their circumstances in life, that they might seek after him and know him; his patience and forbearance towards men in the past times of ignorance, and his commanding them now every where to repent, seeing a new and most interesting era had commenced; a new and glorious dispensation was opening upon the world.

We cannot enlarge on these sublime sentiments; but we can easily imagine with what impressive solemnity and power they must have fallen from the lips of the Apostle, and how by their singular appropriateness and boldness, they must have roused the minds and moved the sensibilities of his hearers. They were such sentiments, as they had never heard before, and it must have been like lifting the veil, of a sudden, from the spiritual world, and letting them look into the realities of God and eternity. Then the inference he draws from the whole of his great argument, how reasonable and how striking? For as much then as we are the offspring of God,

we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver or stone graven by art and man's device. While Paul spake these words the collosal statue of Minerva Promachus, overtopping the Parthenon, was looking down with silent majesty, and the finger of the Apostle might have pointed the assembly to its senseless form; and when he referred to the workmanship of gold and silver and stone, every mind must have reverted to the statues thus composed and adorned; and especially to the image of gold and ivory, the workmanship of Phidias, originally enshrined in the apartment regarded as the innermost sanctuary of the goddess. Shall we, who are God's intelligent offspring, degrade ourselves so far as to suppose that these images, the work of human hands, are gods; or shall we dishonor the Godhead of the spiritual and invisible One, by likening him to these senseless works of human art? One would suppose that an appeal like this, especially from an inspired messenger of God, must have moved the whole audience in deep indignation against idol worship, and led them at once to renounce all such impious fooleries. But we shall see.

The Apostle having announced the introduc-

tion of a new dispensation, and declared the fact that God now commandeth all men every where to repent, presses home this great duty by a distinct reference to a future day of judgment and account. He refers with awful solemnity to the glories and the terrors of that appointed day, when all men must stand before the judgment seat of Christ, for final audit and everlasting retribution. Assurance of this, he declares, has already been given to all men in the resurrection of Jesus Christ; and it is therefore the first and great duty of all to repent, turn unto God and thus be prepared for the scenes of coming destiny.

I have touched only in the briefest manner on some of the principal topics of this great discourse of the Apostle; but enough I trust has been said to satisfy you, that no discourse was ever uttered more replete with profound and weighty truths, or in circumstances and scenery around, better fitted to bring it home, in clear and powerful illustration, and in absorbing, awakening interest to the mind.

Standing where Paul stood, on the brow of the same craggy hill, beneath an Acropolis whose temples are still splendid even in ruins, the christian receives an impression of the power, sublim-

ity, and divine wisdom of that discourse, such as he never before experienced. We pass to notice,—

IV. The effects of the discourse. And certainly, all, who heard it, must have been convinced and converted,—it was so full of light, so reasonable, so cogent in argument, so tender and solemn in appeal, that none, it would seem, could resist its power, or refuse to yield to the duties it enjoins. So we should judge, looking at the case without a knowledge of the facts. But in truth, very little saving fruit was gathered from the discourse before us, or from any other labors performed by the Apostle while he was in Athens. No church, so far as appears, either at this time or subsequently, was gathered there by him. He was heard respectfully, till he touched upon the doctrine of the resurrection; when he was stopped in his discourse by the mocking and derision of some, and by the impatience and restlessness of others. There were those in the assembly, who were too wise to be taught, even, by an inspired messenger of God, respecting a subject, of which from the nature of the case they must have been profoundly ignorant. It is plain that the philosophy, the learning and rank of many

among his hearers gave the Apostle no peculiar advantage in ministering to them the gospel.

They wanted humility and teachableness to profit by his instructions. Pride and vain self conceit armed them against the truth, and they disposed of the Apostle's arguments in a very convenient, summary way, that of mocking at them, and so dismissed, both him and his discourse, with levity and contempt. Others, too much impressed by what they heard for mockery, but not decided to yield to the power of truth and argument, and somewhat impatient, it would seem, either at the length of the discourse, or by its serious, pointed appeals to the conscience, proposed, like Felix, on another occasion, to hear him further, at a more convenient season. So Paul departed from among them, retired from that enlightened, distinguished assembly, with very painful reflections, no doubt, on the vanity of human wisdom, and the obstinacy of human pride.

Howbeit, certain men clave unto him and believed, among whom was Dionysius the Areopagite, and a woman named Damaris, and others with them. Though the Apostle's discourse was lost upon the great body of his hearers, it was not altogether fruitless. A few became obedient

to the faith; a few touched with the power of divine grace, turned from their dumb idols to serve the living God; and humbly to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead; and those few will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of God, for the joy of the Apostle, and for the glory of the Redeemer, when all the proud monuments of Grecian wisdom and power shall not only be crumbled in the dust, as now, but lost in everlasting oblivion.

The subject, I deeply feel, is very imperfectly illustrated; but time forbids me to dwell longer upon it, and I close with remarking,—

1. How perfectly reasonable is religion. Paul, on the occasion before us, made his appeal to the higher faculties of the soul, to the reason, the conscience, the common understanding of his hearers,—and no rational man can read over his address, or seriously consider the course of his argument, with the great truths and motives it contains, without being compelled to admit the reasonableness of every position taken, and of every duty enjoined. There is a God, all perfect and glorious, at the head of the world, the Maker and Ruler of all things. This great truth, which lies at the foundation of religion, forces itself upon

the mind of every man, who looks around upon the works of creation, or considers his own wondrous being: and from it, it follows with irresistible conviction, that every man is bound to love, fear and honor this great and glorious God; that, seeing he giveth life and breath and all things, he is to be gratefully and devoutly acknowledged in all our ways; that since we are sinners in his sight, it is our first and indispensable duty to repent and seek his mercy; and finally, as there is before us an appointed day of judgment and a state of just and eternal retribution, it is the highest wisdom, and most urgent concern of every living man to be in constant preparation for the awful and inevitable scenes before him. But this is religion; the truest, the most reasonable, and the most important thing that can possibly be presented to the mind of man. Let every one, then, use aright the faculties God has given him and be a religious man, fearing and serving God, believing in, and following Christ, and living with a wise reference to those invisible and eternal scenes to which all of us are so rapidly advancing.

2. We see the necessity of an influence above

all argument and motive to bring men to be Christians. Among the hearers of Paul on Mars Hill, there were many of the finest talents, and of the most cultivated minds, that were to be found in Athens, or perhaps, in all Greece. They were addressed by an inspired Apostle, on topics of infinite moment, with a clearness of argument never surpassed, and with a power of motive that would seem irresistible. And yet only a few, a very few, were persuaded to turn from their idols to the living God. But one of the fifty judges, composing the high court of the nation, opened his heart to receive the truth as it is in Jesus. All the others, it would seem, remained in their unbelief, turned away from the light held out to them by the Apostle, and continued still in the darkness of idolatry and sin. So little do mere talents and learning avail in the great concern of religion and salvation. Something above talents, something above learning, something above all argument and motive is needed to bring men to repentance and faith in Christ. The pride of the heart is not subdued by argument. The obstinacy of a selfish will does not bend to the power of mere motive. The

men whom Paul addressed on Mars Hill, were men of enlightened minds,—of clear intelligence; abundantly able to understand the force of an argument, and to appreciate the power of motives; and never was argument or motive more clearly or forcibly presented, than in the discourse we have been considering. But all in vain in respect to the great body of the hearers. Their pride, their vanity, their selfishness and worldliness were more than a match for all the cogency of reasoning, and power of appeal, which even an Apostle could bring to bear upon them. So in all cases. The heart of man is desperately wicked, and it yields to no influence but that of the spirit of God; and this is just as true of men of talents and learning, of rank and station, as it is of men of inferior mind and of the humblest walks in life.

3. Let us all be reminded that in the truths declared by Paul on Mars Hill, we each of us have a deep personal interest. The God whom he declares is our God; the providence he describes is that which surrounds us; the government he unfolds is that under which we live; the command to repent which he proclaims is

addressed to us; and the resurrection from the dead—the appointed day of righteous judgment which he asserts, are scenes which lie before us, and the consequences of which we are to meet on the track of our future being.

The men who heard these great truths, as they fell from the Apostles lips, both those who believed, and those who believed not, have long since learned their reality in eternity, the one in joyous, the other in awful experience. We too who have heard them to-day, shall soon go to learn them in the same place and in the same manner, in eternity;—in heaven or in hell. Let us learn them now, believe them now, feel and obey them now:—then shall we be prepared to welcome in peace, the revelations of the last day, and enter with joy into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord.

BIGOTRY

EXHIBITED AND REPROVED

IN THE

WOMAN OF SAMARIA.

BIGOTRY EXHIBITED AND REPROVED IN THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.*

"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."—JOHN 4: 21—26.

THIS is a part of the conversation which our blessed Lord had with the woman of Samaria, at Jacob's well. The whole conversation is deeply interesting and instructive, and I invite your attention to it, this morning, with the view of showing the spirit of the woman as a bigot, the wisdom of the Saviour in his treatment of her, and the happy consequences which resulted from his manner of treating her.

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* This discourse has before appeared in the National Preacher. It is re-published here because it is of the same general character with the others contained in this volume, and treats on a subject of much practical importance.

On the morning of the 4th of last April,* having spent the preceding night in Nabulus, the ancient Schechem, afterwards Sychar, I left the town about nine o'clock, in company with several of my fellow travelers, and began to ascend Mount Gerizim, which rose before us to the height of about eight hundred feet, and stretched to the east, the point which we wished to attain. The ascent was steep and difficult; but after near an hour's hard toil, we reached the highest elevation, where the ancient Samaritans were wont to pay their worship, and where now the little remnant of them, residing at Nabulus, go in procession four times a year for the same purpose. Here is their *holy place*, where they sacrifice the passover, seven lambs among them all, and perform their various religious services, believing them to have a peculiar holiness and acceptableness to God, because performed on this particular spot. There is no temple there, though there are the ruins of one, and the fragments of buildings which lie scattered thick around, indicate that a large town once occupied this site. The view from this position is one of exceeding beauty and grandeur. Overlooking the intervening hills and valleys,

* 1844.

you see in the west, at the distance of some twenty or thirty miles, the Mediterranean, bordering the broad rich plain of Sharon, stretching far to the north and south. Over against you, on the north, rises Mount Ebal, to an equal height with that of Mount Gerizim, but more bold and rocky if possible, and so near that voices can be heard from one mountain to the other, separated only by a valley of about five hundred yards wide. Beneath you, at the east, lies spread out a rich extended plain, including the tomb of Joseph, Jacob's farm as it is called, and also the well which bears his name. Along the foot of the Mount and on the edge of the plain, runs the road which leads from Jerusalem to Galilee, on which our Lord and his disciples were wont to travel, as they went to and from these places.

Standing on the summit of Gerizim, with the various localities distinctly marked and spread out in full view before me, I could easily imagine that I saw the blessed Saviour and his followers, on the occasion referred to in our text, wending their way along this road around the south-east base of the mountain, and drawing near to Jacob's well. There the Master, wearied with his jour-

ney and the heat of the day, seats himself by the well, while his disciples pass up the valley a short distance, to the city, to buy food. At this point a woman of Samaria comes near to draw water. With a view to engage her in conversation, our Saviour asks her to give him to drink. Instantly her prejudices are roused, and she replies, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? There had been a controversy between the Jews and Samaritans of long standing. It related especially to the proper place of worshiping God,—the Jews claiming that it was in Jerusalem, and the Samaritans that it was in Mount Gerizim. This controversy ran so high, and was carried on with such bitterness of spirit, that it interrupted all the civilities of life, and even prevented common dealings with one another. This old enmity continues to the present day, and the little handful of Samaritans, about one hundred and twenty* in number, residing in Nabulus, still insist that on Mount Gerizim is the very place where God is to be worshiped, and all the world are wrong on this point but themselves.

* They are variously estimated from 120 to 150.

The woman who came to draw water had caught the spirit of her sect. She was evidently full of the subject in controversy, and it so absorbed her thoughts, and perverted her feelings, as to make her utterly blind to the deep, spiritual instruction which fell from the lips of the divine Teacher. Hence, when he spoke of giving her living water, if she would but ask it, of which if one drink he shall never thirst, she could think only of *common literal* water, and at once began to question whether he was greater than Jacob, who had given the well to her ancestors, and drank of it himself with his children and cattle.

And when, in the course of the conversation, she was convinced that our Lord was a prophet, because he showed himself acquainted with her secret history and thoughts, instead of seeking instruction from him how she might repent of sin, and be saved, she at once raised the old dispute and says: Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, but ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship. The great thing with her was the *place*, the *manner*, the *form* of worship, not the *spirit*, the *life*, the *heart* of it. Though her morals were very questionable, and

she was at this time living with one who was not her husband, still she was mighty zealous for her sect, and was ready at once to enter into a dispute as to the place and manner of worship. In a word she was a bigot. She attached an undue importance to the mere circumstantials of religion, to forms and ceremonies. She was obstinately and unreasonably wedded to a sect, a party, a practice and ritual, which had respect to the externals, the outside of religion; and this made her exclusive, filled her with prejudice and dislike against all who differed from her in regard to these outward, non-essential parts of opinion, or did not come up to her standard, in worship.

This is the proper idea of a bigot; and I have drawn it out thus particularly, that you may know just what character is denoted by the term. It denotes a person who has a blind, unreasonable attachment to a particular creed, or place, or mode of worship; and maintains that attachment with an exclusive, sectarian spirit. It is no bigotry to hold fast the great essentials of religion, or to maintain with earnestness and zeal, the faith once delivered to the saints, which involves the

honor of God and the salvation of man. Our Lord was no bigot, though he made faith in him and his doctrines essential to salvation. Paul was no bigot, though he maintained the truth of the gospel with uncompromising firmness, and even wished those were cut off, who perverted the true gospel, and preached one that was false. So Luther and the reformers of his day were no bigots, though they waged deadly war against the corruptions of Rome, and maintained, at the peril of their lives, the great fundamental doctrines of the Bible. Bigotry does not consist in believing, loving and maintaining the truth and ordinances of God, with a zeal and firmness proportioned to their relative importance. But it consists in magnifying what is small; in erecting into terms of communion and conditions of salvation, things which are not allowed to be such in the Bible, and contending for these things with a narrow, exclusive, sectarian spirit. The pharisees were bigots; who, while they omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment and the love of God, paid tithe of mint, anise and cummin, and insisted upon the observance of their ritual, as essential to acceptable worship. The catholics are

bigots, and all who symbolize with them in sentiment and practice, because they unreasonably magnify forms and ceremonies, and make connection with their church essential to pardon and acceptance with God,—consigning all, who are not so connected, to uncovenanted mercy. So were the woman of Samaria and her countrymen, generally, bigots, because they believed that God could be worshiped no where, acceptably, but on Mount Gerizim, and were so intolerant in maintaining this dogma, that they bitterly hated their neighbors, the Jews, who worshiped God in Jerusalem. And never did bigotry appear to me more odious, or more contemptible, wicked and foolish, than when I saw it exemplified in the old Samaritan priest, a man about sixty-five years of age, and his son, who promises to be a worthy successor of his father. There they were, I saw them in their synagogue, the only two duly authorized priests in all the world, and the little company of their adherents, some one hundred and twenty, all told, the only true church on earth,—both priests and church having come down in the veritable line of succession from Aaron, and still having in their possession, the

oldest and only true copy of the Pentateuch in the world,—it having been written by Abishua, the son of Phineas, three thousand four hundred and sixty years ago, all of which is to be received as a part of essential faith. And when after an hour's hard ride up a steep mountain, over ravines, and precipices, and rocks, I stood on the spot, where, according to Samaritan faith, men must go to worship God, if they would worship him acceptably, I could not but exclaim, *this is genuine bigotry;—here we have it,*—it sends people away from the ever present Father, from the true spiritual worship, which he requires, and bids them climb to the tops of mountains, and there sets them down amid rocky desolation and barrenness, and feeds them with empty forms and ceremonies. There stood Ebal, frowning over against me; and I could not but think, that all the curses which Moses commanded should be denounced from thence, against those who should forsake the right ways of the Lord and go after idols, might justly fall, with a ten-fold weight, on such as pervert the simplicity and spirituality of christian worship, teach for doctrines the commandments of men, and delude people with the

vain conceit of superior sanctity and acceptableness to God, simply because they belong to a particular church, or pay their worship in a particular place, and according to particular forms. Let us turn now and consider:

II. The manner in which our Saviour treated this bigoted woman of Samaria.

1. It is worthy of remark, that he entered into no dispute with her. At the very commencement of the interview, the woman started several topics which were of a controversial nature. She expressed her surprise that our Lord, being a Jew, should ask drink of her, who was a Samaritan. She questioned his superiority, both in respect to wisdom and power, to her ancestor Jacob. And she claimed that Gerizim, and not Jerusalem, was the place where men ought to worship. These several points our Lord evaded, as of little importance in themselves, and entirely irrelevant to the object he had in view, which was to convince the woman of her error and sinfulness, and bring her to repentance. She was not now in a state of mind to be convinced or profited by disputation. She was narrow, sectarian, bigoted in her feelings. The difficulty in her case was more

of the heart than of the head, and if our Lord had entered into controversy with her on the points she suggested, the effect would have been to confirm her prejudice and inflame still more her ill temper. He therefore aims to draw her away from matters controversial and speculative, and to fix her attention upon the great spiritual truths of religion.

There are some persons with whom it does no good to dispute; and bigots are eminently of this character. They are diseased at heart. They see every thing through a false medium. Their state of mind is such, as make little things appear great, and great things little. And to attempt to convince such persons by argument, were as vain as to try to make blind men see, or deaf men hear by argument. The application, in such cases, should be to the heart rather than to the head. And this was the way in which our Saviour treated the woman of Samaria. Her mind was full of prejudice and bigotry respecting the external, non-essential parts of religion. To have disputed with her on these things, would have been like pouring oil on fire. The divine Teacher therefore avoided them, and led her to the know-

ledge of the truth, by another and more successful method.

2. There is something very noticeable in the mildness and gentleness with which our Saviour treated this woman. Her manner of addressing the stranger, who sat by the well side, was exceedingly arrogant and offensive. She refused to give him so much as a drink of water; held his character in disparagement as a Jew, and plainly intimated that he was wholly wrong on the question as to the place and manner of paying acceptable worship to God. Passing by all this, our blessed Lord, in the mildest and gentlest manner possible, goes on in his discourse with her, as though nothing improper had fallen from her lips, and gradually corrects her errors about the place and mode of worship, about forms and ceremonies, opening to her view the great spiritual truths of religion. He turns her attention away from rites and forms, and leads her to think of *herself*, her sins, her own personal need of grace to sanctify and save her; and all this he does in so kind and so serious a manner, that he soon began to win upon her confidence, to allay her prejudices, and she was prepared in the end

to listen to him, first as a prophet, and then as the Messias, the Saviour of the world. Here we have a perfect model of the way in which we should treat persons who are under the influence of the spirit of bigotry and sectarianism. They can be won by kindness much easier than they can be convinced by argument. They have a heart to feel the attractions of love, though they may have no mind to see the light or feel the power of argument, especially when aimed at their prejudices. We can hope very little good from cold dry argument, employed against sectarians and bigots. And least of all can good be expected from railing at them, or calling them hard names. If any insist that Mount Gerizim is the place where God must be worshiped, or, which is virtually the same thing, if any insist that theirs is the only true church, theirs the only authorized ministry, theirs the only valid ordinances, and that all not connected with their communion, are out of the appointed way of salvation, and must be left, like the heathen, to uncovenanted mercies,—if any, I say, insist upon dogmas like these, breathing only the spirit of bigotry and narrow-mindedness, the best way to

treat them is that adopted by our Saviour in the case before us. Do not dispute with them, do not assail their prejudices; but treat them kindly; pity them and pray for them; and strive, when you converse with them, to bring them to a better frame of mind, to think of their sins, and of their personal need of God's mercy to pardon and save them.

3. In his conversation with the woman of Samaria, our Saviour aimed to show her the worthlessness of all mere forms of worship, by leading her to entertain just views of the nature of the true, spiritual worship of God. The opportunity was most favorable for giving instruction on these points, and our blessed Lord improves it, not for the benefit of the woman only, but of all who should become his disciples in after ages. At the point where she brought forward the main dogma of her faith, that Mount Gerizim was the appointed place of worship, the Saviour meets her with the declaration—Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet in Jerusalem, worship the Father. Hitherto the public, solemn worship of God has been confined to one place. It has been a matter of

dispute whether that place should be Jerusalem or Mount Gerizim. That controversy is now of little importance. A new, spiritual dispensation is about to commence. The peculiar rites of Judaism are to cease; and the worship of God, no longer confined to a single place, is to be observed every where, and with as much acceptance in one place as another. It is not the *place*, it is not the outward *form* that God regards in his worship; but the *heart*, the *spirit*, the *frame* of the inner man. The hour is coming, yea is, when external rites and ceremonies as connected with worship, are to be accounted of no value in themselves; and the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship him. The reason assigned for this follows,—God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. This is one of the first truths of religion, and one of the sublimest truths ever presented to the mind of man. God is announced as a pure, spiritual Being; invisible, eternal, present in every place. This being his nature, he dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshiped by men's hands, as though he needed

any thing, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things. A pure, a holy, a spiritual worship is therefore alone adapted to his nature; that alone he seeks and requires; the offering of the heart, the homage of the mind, the devout, reverential subjection of the soul to him, the all-perfect Jehovah, the eternal infinite I Am. How does instruction like this put to flight all the silly notions that men have invented in regard to times, and places, and rites, and forms of worship? God is a Spirit, a great truth; and it follows irresistibly from this, that if we would worship God acceptably, we must worship him in spirit and in truth; our hearts, our souls, must be in our worship; all forms, all ceremonies, however exact, however costly, are nothing without this; and with this, our worship is right and acceptable to God, wherever paid and in whatever forms.

III. Let us pass to notice, thirdly, the happy consequences which resulted from the manner in which our Saviour treated the woman of Samaria. And,

1. Her prejudices were gradually subdued, and her mind was opened to listen to the instructions of the divine teacher, with candor and docility.

2. Drawn away from her excessive and bigoted regard to things outward and non-essential, she was made to think of her personal sinfulness, and to feel her need of renewing grace and pardoning mercy. Hence,

3. There is reason to believe that she was converted, became a christian, and an heir of heaven.

4. Through her instrumentality, or in consequence of the change wrought in her, and her zeal in reporting what she had seen and heard of Christ, many others of the Samaritans came from the city to hear him for themselves, and became his disciples. All this is evident, as you may see from a perusal of the narrative from which our text is taken. But I cannot enlarge. Our blessed Lord, seeing the fields white unto the harvest, multitudes flocking from the city and surrounding villages to hear him, was persuaded by the people to tarry with them two days. And many more it is said, believed, because of his own word; and said unto the woman,—now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world. Now, all this resulted from the manner in which our Saviour treated the

woman in question. He entered into no dispute with her. He did uot directly attack her prejudices; but led her along in the most kind and winning manner, laying open great, spiritual truths to her view, till at length awakened, convinced and converted, she renounced her bigotry, turned from Gerizim to Christ, learned to worship God in spirit and in truth, and showed the sincerity and earnestness of her faith, by striving to bring others to an acquaintance with him whom she had chosen as her Saviour and King.

The change in her was great and most happy, as it was also in those of her countrymen who believed in Christ. Convinced of the great truth that God is a Spirit, and that all acceptable worship of him must be from the heart, sincere, internal, spiritual, they were no longer disposed to quarrel about places and modes of worship; but were anxious only to prove themselves to be of those true worshipers, who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. A Christian church was subsequently gathered there, and for many generations christianity flourished there with much purity and power. At length war, in its successive ravages, swept away the city; laid waste the surrounding country; and now all that remains

of ancient piety and of the pure worship of God, are the ruins of two churches—one at Sebastie, the ancient Samaria; the other near to Jacob's well, where our Lord held the discourse, on which we have been remarking, with the woman of Samaria.

The lessons which I have wished to impress on your minds, my friends, by what I have said, are these.

1. To show you the *nature, evil* and *cure* of bigotry—a moral malady, very prevalent in our day, and not a little contagious. Its *nature* is to make great things little and little things great; to attach an overweening importance to things outward and non-essential, and to maintain these things with an obstinate, exclusive spirit. The *evil* of bigotry is to beget and cherish a bad spirit in those who are the subjects of it; to narrow and to sour their minds; to pervert and make void the great essential truths of the gospel; to delude and destroy men by leading them to trust in dead forms and ceremonies, to the neglect of charity and the love of God; and finally to spread through the community where it prevails, the fruits of jealousy, alienation, sectarianism and strife. The

cure of it, as we learn from our Saviour, is not in disputation, or in harsh denunciatory dealing, but in kindness, in pity, in forbearance, in drawing away the mind from its fond, perverting attachment to things outward and little, by opening to its view and pressing on its attention the great, fundamental, spiritual truths of religion. Here is the cure of bigotry. It is a disease of the heart, rather than of the head, and no applications are likely to remove it, which do not tend to make the heart better, to expel selfishness and pride from the bosom, and inspire there the love of God and the love of man. I wished,

2. To show you, from the example of Christ, how you should treat bigots. The Samaritan woman was a bigot. She believed that her's was the only true church, that Mount Gerizim was the only place where God could be acceptably worshiped, and that the priests of her order were the only ones authorized to minister in the things of religion. It was *a hard case, very hard.* You have seen how the Saviour treated it. He did not dispute with her; he did not denounce her; he did not rail at her, or ridicule her; but compassionating her weakness, and her folly, for holding such notions, he conversed with her in

such a manner as to conciliate her kind feelings, and thus prepared the way to let in the light of great essential truths upon her mind, which converted her from her bigotry, and made her a true disciple of Christ. This is the right way; and it is the only way that is likely to be of any avail in curing or correcting the bigotry of our times. We see it prevailing widely around us. In various quarters, and in different sects, persons are rising up, both laity and clergy, who greatly magnify little things; who are for ever insisting upon the importance of certain rites and forms in religion; who claim that they are of the only true church, and in the only appointed way of salvation. Now I do not know that all the disputing and arguing, of which there has been so much in these last years, have availed to convert or to cure a single one of the many who are infected with the bigotry indicated by such sentiments. Such disputing and arguing may have operated, and I think have operated, as a sanitary measure to keep others from taking the disease; just as we draw a cordon around a place where the yellow fever or plague prevails; but it is more than I know if a single one, already under the power of the disease, has ever been recovered by the means

referred to. Another remedy must be used; and what that is, you may learn from the example of the Saviour in the case we have been considering. A high churchman, a bigot, whether he be Congregational, Presbyterian, Baptist, Episcopalian, Catholic, Jew or Mahometan—and the spirit in all of them is essentially alike—is not, I think, primarily to be approached with disputation and argument. He is beyond the reach of these. The first effort should be in the way of pity, compassion and kindness, just as we deal with diseased persons; and then, avoiding all dispute on points of controversy, seek to fix the attention upon the great, spiritual truths of religion, such as relate directly to the soul, to God and salvation. This method is likely to be blessed of God; and whether it succeed or not, you will have the satisfaction of having imitated the example of Christ, and must stand approved of him.

3. I wished, in selecting the subject of my text for your consideration, to lead you to a just view of true and acceptable worship. It is, that it be of the heart, of the spirit; that it proceed from a mind deeply and solemnly affected with a view of God as a Spirit, pure, holy, invisible, every-

where present; and that it be offered to him in true sincerity of soul. This is the worship which is due to our God; the worship which he requires of us; which alone is acceptable in his sight, or can be of any benefit to ourselves. This worship, it is our privilege to know, can be rendered to God at any time and in any place. It is not confined to the cathedral or to the church, and is not limited to the Sabbath, or to any one day or hour of the week. In the house, by the way, at home, abroad, kneeling in the closet, or bowing in the great congregation, God, the eternal, ever-present Spirit, is near to us, and we may worship him in spirit and in truth. He knows our wants; his ear is attentive to our cry; and never can we be in a situation, where we shall not have the privilege of bowing down and worshiping him, the great Eternal.

But while the spirituality of God thus presents him to our view as ever present with us, to regard and accept our worship, it shows us also that no worship can be acceptable to him, which is not in spirit and in truth; proceeding from a mind reverent of the divine majesty, penetrated with a sense of unworthiness, and moved with a sincere desire of his favor and glory. All other wor-

ship but this, wherever paid and in whatever forms, is but empty breath in the sight of him, the great Searcher of hearts, with whom we have to do. Let this thought possess your mind whenever you kneel in the closet, bow in the family, or enter the sanctuary to worship. God is *there*, is *here*, to notice the frame of your spirit, the thoughts and feelings of the inner man; and while he will graciously hear the humble and contrite in spirit, and bestow all needed grace and help, he will frown upon the proud, the insincere, and the worldly, however gorgeous the forms, or imposing the rites in which their worship is paid.

RELIGION OF THE EAST.

RELIGION OF THE EAST.

Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.—2 Timothy 3 : 5.

It is remarkable, that this having a form of godliness, while the power of it was denied, is predicated of persons who, in the context, are represented as grossly immoral and wicked,—proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

This union of gross impiety and wickedness, with an observance of the forms of religion, cannot but strike us, as a strange and most inconsistent anomally in human character. And yet it is just what was exhibited by the scribes and Pharisees, and by great multitudes of the Jewish nation, in the times of our Lord; and it is just what is seen at the present day, in all its deformity and offensiveness, throughout the countries of the East,

whether we refer to the followers of the false prophet, or to the various sects of nominal christians. No one thing is more striking in the character of these people, than their careful observance of the forms of godliness, while they deny or are entirely destitute of the power thereof, and are grossly wicked. The truth is, man was made to be a religious being; and I mean by this, not merely that he has intellectual and moral faculties, which qualify him for religion, but that in his very nature he has wants, deep, irrepressible wants, which nothing but religion, in some form, can satisfy. Now as men in their apostacy are averse to the true God and the holy service which he requires of them, they go about to invent a god of their own, and a religion which while, in some sense, it satisfies the wants of the soul, shall at the same time gratify their pride and selfishness, and leave them undisturbed in their sins. This accounts for all the various systems of idolatry and false religion in the world; and shows how it is, that men may be very strict in observing the forms of godliness, and yet live in the practice of every immorality and crime. This, as I have said, is strikingly characteristic of the religion of

the East; including in that designation the countries in and around the Mediterranean; especially, the mingled people of the Turkish empire,—Mohammedans, Jews, and the various sects of nominal christians.

It cannot, of course, be expected, that I should go into a particular description of the religious doctrines and practices which prevail in the countries referred to. All that can be attempted, in a single discourse, is to present some of the more general characteristics of the religion of the East. And my object in doing this is to make you acquainted with the spirit and tendencies of the religious systems which prevail there; to lead you to a juster appreciation of your own high privileges, and to a better knowledge of the religion of the Bible, as a spiritual religion, and alone adapted to raise us from the degradation and misery of sin, and fit us for a holy and happy heaven.

1. In speaking of the religion of the East, my first remark is, there is a great deal of it. One of the first things which attracted my notice on approaching and sailing along the coast of Spain and Portugal, and down the Mediterranean, was

the number of convents and religious houses of various name, which presented themselves from the lofty head lands on which they are situated. At Gibraltar, I saw less of this; for that place, from a very early period of European history, has been occupied chiefly as a strong military post or fortress; and the people collected there, some fifteen or twenty thousand, are from all parts of the world, and appeared to have very little religion of any kind.

When I reached Malta, it seemed, as I have said elsewhere, by far the most religious place I ever saw. Ecclesiastics, churches, religious processions, crosses, ringing of bells, and people going to and from worship, arrested my attention wherever I went. Attendance upon religious ceremonies of some kind, appeared to occupy a large part of the time, and to constitute the principal business, or rather I should say, amusement of the people, for religion in the East is very much a matter of amusement. The same thing, though not perhaps in quite so great a degree, I witnessed in all the Catholic countries I visited. Religion, in some form or ministration of it, was a most striking feature in the moral landscape.

In Greece, in Turkey and Syria, I was every where impressed with the religious aspect of society around me.

The Turks are, naturally, a grave, and apparently devout people. As a general fact, they are remarkably strict in observing the rites of their religion. Five times a day the muezzin, from the highest tower of the *jami* or minaret, summons the faithful to their devotions, by crying out in loud, plaintive tones; There is no God but God; Mahomet is the prophet of God; come to prayer; come to the asylum of salvation; Great God! There is no God but God. Every good mussulman prays at least three times a day; at sunrise, noon, and sunset; and those, who adhere more strictly to the prophet's command, perform a similar act of devotion between each of those periods. I have often been exceedingly struck with the apparent devoutness with which the Turks perform their devotions. It makes no difference where they are, whether on a steamboat, or in company, or by the way-side; when the appointed hour comes, they go through their ablutions, turn their faces towards Mecca, and say their prayers,—if indeed that can be called

prayer, which has neither confession, supplication, or intercession, but is simply an act of homage to the Supreme Being, acknowledging his mercy and his omnipotence.* Friday is their Sabbath, when the mosques are frequented by large numbers, and the services are conducted by imams or priests appointed for that purpose. They are equally strict in observing the feasts

*The Turks appear very devout in their religion; so they do in eating a dinner, and smoking a pipe. But grave and serious as they are wont to appear in their devotions, it is no uncommon thing for them to break off in the midst, converse, and laugh and storm and scold, and then fall to their prayers again. This latter fact I witnessed in the great mosque at Broosa. A Turk of high distinction, whom we saw there engaged in his devotions, railed and stormed at us, and our conductor, for allowing us to enter the sacred place, though we had a permit from the Pasha to do so,—and having vented his rage, he engaged again very devoutly in his prayers. The truth is, prayer, as understood and practiced by the Turks, has nothing to do with the heart. It has seven conditions in order to be acceptable. 1. Clean raiment. 2. Clean face, hands and feet,—hence ablution before prayer. 3. Clean place to kneel upon. 4. The face must be towards Mecca. 5th and 6th conditions not to be named for their indecency. 7. There must be an intention to pray in the manner and number of times prescribed. None of these conditions touch the heart.

and fasts enjoined by their religion. The annual fast of Ramazan continues a month; during which no refreshment of any kind is allowed to be taken from dawn in the morning, till dusk in the evening, and it is truly wonderful how generally and strictly this long and severe fast is observed by the people. It is especially severe in relation to those who are obliged to labor some sixteen hours a day, under a burning sun; but they seldom break the law of their fast.

Every mussulman too is expected, in the course of his life, to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca; and he is under obligation to do this, whenever it will not take more than half his property to perform the journey, being allowed to reserve the other half on which to subsist when he returns home. The religion of the Turks shows itself also in various charities, such as feeding doves, dogs and other animals, in opening fountains and erecting *caravanserais*, and places of prayer by the way side, for the accommodation of travelers. Finally, their religion displays itself in their burying grounds, and on the monuments erected over their graves, the inscriptions on which record their faith and their good deeds, and solicit the

prayers of passers by; for the Turks believe in praying to the dead and for the dead.

In regard to the religion of nominal christians in the East, there is certainly no lack of it, if reference be had merely to outward forms and observances. These abound to such a degree as to become a burden too heavy to be borne; operating in many cases as a most serious detriment to the industry and comfortable subsistence of the people. Besides the two weekly fasts on Wednesday and Friday, the Greek church prescribes four Lents in each year, one before Easter, another before Christmas, a third in honour of the Virgin Mary, and a fourth in honour of St. Peter and St. Paul. These together make the number of days on which fasting is enjoined, more than those on which animal food is allowed; and the fast days and feast days, noted both in the Greek and Armenian Calendars, exceed, by considerable, the whole number of days in a year. The services in the churches are exceedingly frequent, and often protracted through many hours of the day. During my stay in Constantinople, I was often roused from my sleep

long before day, by a heavy pounding on the street pavement, designed to summon the Armenians to their places of worship, and I found when present on such occasions, as I sometimes was, that the number in attendance at that early hour was large.

The Oriental Christians, like the Mohammedans, bring forward their religion on all occasions. Their baptisms, their marriages, and their funerals are connected with very numerous rites and ceremonies. Some six or seven distinct religious services are performed for the dead, among the Armenians, during the first year after their decease. They always cross themselves when they take their food, when they kneel, when they rise from prayer, retire to rest, get up, walk, dress, or engage in any important business. The presence of company does not prevent them from saying their daily prayers; and a pilgrimage to Jerusalem is deemed a sacred duty, and a service of great merit, to be performed by all who are not prevented by ill health, or the want of means. Hence thousands of pilgrims, from all parts of the Eastern world, annually resort to the holy city,

there to perform their vows and pay their worship; and when they return home, they are regarded as saints of a distinguished order. These few facts may suffice to show, that there is a great deal of religion of some kind among the people of the East. I remark,

2. It costs a great deal. I am satisfied from all I saw and could learn, that the amount expended in this country for the support of religion, including all religious charities of every name, is but a moiety of what is spent for similar purposes in the East. Mohammedism, though much more simple than the forms of christianity that prevail in that part of the world, is still very expensive. There are various orders in the priesthood, such as Mufti, Imam, Sheik and others, who are supported by public endowments connected with the mosques, or by private donations for services performed. The revenues of some of the royal mosques are said to amount to the enormous sum of 60,000 pounds sterling.

The clergy of all ranks at Constantinople are estimated at from fifteen to twenty-five thousand. Besides these, there are some thirty orders of Dervishes or Monks, who, as in Papal countries,

live chiefly on charity or by begging. The fasts and feasts prescribed in the Koran, are usually observed with great exactness; and the cost of these in time and money is by no means small. Then the pilgrimage to Mecca, which is supposed to be binding on every true follower of the prophet, often involves a great expense of property, and hazard of health and life. It is almost incredible what sums of money are sometimes given in charity, by wealthy mussulmen, when performing their pilgrimage to the tomb of the prophet. And the sacrifices of animals on such occasions are frequently enormous; sometimes amounting to many thousands of sheep, cows and camels.

In regard to the various Christian sects, their religion, I cannot doubt, is much more expensive, than that of the Mohammedans. The number of ecclesiastics of various orders is very large. At Nicomedia, there were seven Armenian priests to about 2000 souls. And I have no reason to believe that the proportion is much less in other places. In Malta the proportion is as one to every eighty or one hundred of the inhabitants. Many of the churches are large and costly edifi-

ces; and for richness and splendor in their interior, we have nothing in this country to compare with them. Paintings, images, statuary meet you on every side; and the silver and gold, in the form of candlesticks and lamps, and various other church utensils and ornaments, force upon one the impression, that religion in the East costs a great deal. To all this must be added the time which is spent in attending upon the numerous rites and ceremonies of this religion, in keeping fast days and feast days, and in going on long, expensive pilgrimages; when all these things are considered, you will, I think, admit the conclusion to which I was forced, when on the ground, that religion in that part of the world makes heavy demands on the people for its support; is exceedingly expensive both of time and money. I observe,

3. This religion does the people no good. It has a form of godliness; but it has no power to enlighten, sanctify, make happy or save. It is, in the language of our Saviour, like salt which has lost its savour; it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men. Mohammedism lies as a dreadful curse

upon the whole Turkish empire. It is a strange compound of ignorance, arrogance, superstition, bigotry and sensualism. It spreads blasting and desolation over the very soil of the country, and over all the best interests of society. Under its deadening influence, the Turks are scarcely further advanced in any of the forms of civilization, than they were four centuries ago.

It may be admitted that for truthfulness in their words, and good faith in trade, the Turks do not suffer from a comparison with their native christian neighbors. But this is very meagre praise, when it is considered, how miserably degraded are their christian neighbors in point of morals. The Turks, I believe, are naturally a noble race of men. They have "germs of character, which, if fostered by a proper moral influence, would give them a high rank among the nations of the earth." But their religion is their destruction. It represses all that is free, generous, noble in their nature, and subjects them to a miserable bigotry, ignorance, pride and blood-thirsty cruelty. The Koran, the Bible of the Turk, made up of Paganism, Judaism, and corrupted Christianity, is the fundamental law of the land, civil, political and religious; and it is the great support

of the despotism, which every where crushes the people to the earth. It has swept many of the fairest portions of the globe as with the besom of destruction. Where once religion and civilization flourished, and the people were comparatively enlightened, industrious and happy, you now behold only the monuments of departed greatness, and signs of a wide spread and general desolation. And when you seek for the cause of this, you are constrained to believe, it is found, chiefly, in the religion of the false prophet. It allows no liberty to the subject, but puts all power into the hands of the Sultan; it paralyzes industry and enterprise; is opposed to all change or improvement in the state of society, and consequently holds the people at large in a condition of extreme ignorance and sluggishness. Education, so far as it exists at all, is almost exclusively limited to the religion of the Koran, and is opposed to every other kind of knowledge, and to every other source of information not Mohammedan. The religion of the Turk necessarily makes him arrogant, bigoted and revengeful. He is taught from his earliest years to look with contempt upon all who are not of his faith; he consigns them at once to the fires of hell, and while

he never prays for the conversion of infidels, as he calls them, nor seeks to convince them by argument, he deems it altogether right and meritorious to propagate his religion by fire and sword. He is indeed uniform and apparently devout in his prayers, but at the same time indulges the most fierce and violent passions; is addicted to gross sensuality, and to crimes which decency forbids me to name; and perfectly assured that no follower of the prophet can possibly be lost or fail of entering paradise, his conscience is kept quiet in the midst of his sensualism and crimes, and he usually meets death with a singular degree of indifference and repose.

Such, briefly, is the influence of Mohammedism, an influence devoid of all that purifies the heart, and elevates the character, and operates only to depress, to brutalize, and to remove its disciples further and further, from all fitness for the enjoyment of God and a holy heaven.

The same substantially is the influence of the various corrupt forms of Christianity which prevail in the Eastern world. One characteristic belongs to them all; they are destitute of spiritual life; are mere dead forms; having no con-

nection with purity of heart and holiness of conduct; but are satisfied with an observance of outward rites and ceremonies. This is the grand delusion which prevails in all the Oriental churches. Their religion, though so abundant and costly, is devoid of inward principle; an abstraction; something outward and visible, like Pharisaism of old; not a thing to be taken into the bosom to purify the affections and regulate the life; but a thing to be done up and laid aside, as you do any outward task, and then full liberty is supposed to be allowed to do whatever one pleases. Hence, scarcely any thing is more common among Eastern Christians, whether Roman Catholic, Greek, Armenian, Syrian or Coptic, than to see the grossest immoralities connected with a very exact and devout observance of religious duties.* I have mentioned on a former

* Such cases sometimes occur among professing Christians in this land; but they are insulated cases, comparatively rare, and no one thinks of justifying them, or supposes them consistent with religion. Whereas in the East, the severance of morality from religion is exceedingly common, so common that its total inconsistency with piety is not seen, and gross immorality is deemed no evidence that a man is not a good Christian.

The following fact is stated by the Rev. J. Hartley, in his Researches in Greece and the Levant, page 59.

occasion, the case of a Greek, in the island of Spetzia, who, in pursuit of a Turk to put him to death, rushed into a church where he supposed he might find him; but failing of his object, he

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"Some Samiot freebooters, in the course of a plundering expedition to the neighborhood of Smyrna, entered a Greek house and demanded food. Animal food was presented to them. They shrunk from it with abhorrence—"how could they be guilty of such a sin?" "I have made voyages with Greeks of the most vicious character. They were men who seemed to indulge, without restraint, in profaneness, falsehood and licentiousness; and yet these very persons, when they observed me partaking of animal food on their fast days, have turned from me as a person guilty of a great sin to which they were happily strangers." "The union which is observable between a rigid attention to certain ordinances of religion, and an open violation of its most important precepts, is easily explained. The human mind is seldom so entirely insensible to the superior interests of eternity, as to neglect every species of preparation for them. It looks for something, either active or passive, either great or small, which may in some degree still the voice of conscience, and impart hope on approaching the grave. Amongst the Greeks, the injunctions of abstinence afford a most convenient resource of this description. Whatever crime may have been committed, the reflection, that strict obedience has been rendered to the self-denying command of abstinence, presents a soporific to the conscience, otherwise ready to be startled by an alarm of guilt; and, practically, dependence is placed on it, as on an atonement sufficient to expiate the offence."

turned to go out, when, catching a sight of an image of the Virgin Mary, he stopped, performed his devotions, went out, found his victim and imbrued his hands in his blood.

It was stated to me by the Rev. Mr. T. that while he resided as missionary at Malta, three men were concerned in killing and robbing a man of his money; and then to make atonement for the crime, they agreed to give a third of their plunder in charity, another third to the priest, and keep the remainder themselves; and this process, in their view, discharged their consciences of all guilt.

You have doubtless heard of the Greek pirates, condemned and executed in Malta some years since, for robbery on the high seas. It appeared at their trial, that in plundering a certain vessel, while they seized every vegetable article of food on board, a barrel of fish was left untouched. The court demanded the reason. The pirates replied that, it being Lent when they robbed the vessel, the use of fish was then prohibited by the Greek church; and God forbid they should be guilty of breaking their church's laws. They could rob and murder on the high

seas; but they were too religious to eat fish in Lent.

It is related by the Rev. Mr. Hartley, in his Researches in Greece and the Levant, that a bishop, on a journey through a district of Maina, was waylaid and plundered, and then permitted to proceed. But it soon occurred to the robbers, that he would procure their excommunication from the church, as soon as he arrived at a place of safety. In apprehension of this, they went in pursuit of the unhappy prelate, and actually put him to death. They were too pious to be cut off from the church, but not to rob and murder.

I will mention another case. It occurred a few miles from Constantinople, and not long before I was there. Two Armenians hired a smith's shop of a Greek, containing an anvil and some other tools necessary to carry on their business, for which they were to pay a certain sum quarterly. At the close of the quarter, the Greek went to get his rent. But lo! only the shop was to be found. Armenians, anvil, tools and all had disappeared. On making inquiry, he found that his pious tenants, thinking they were called to a higher and more sacred vocation, had made off with them-

selves, taking with them all they could carry; and having applied to a bishop for ordination,* had by him been duly inducted into the ministry, and made priests in the true line of Apostolical succession.†

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* It is a notorious fact, that both in the Greek and Armenian churches, almost any person, however destitute of the proper qualifications, may obtain ordination by striking a bargain with a bishop, and paying him well for his services.

† If being ordained by a bishop, or being found in the line of "Apostolical succession," as it is called, is as some teach, the essential element of a valid ministry, then these thieving Armenian blacksmiths were just as veritable priests, as any that have been ordained, either by English or American bishops. That is, according to this class of teachers, no errors in doctrine or wickedness in life, whether in bishop, or in priest, or in both, can invalidate "orders," provided only that the formalities of consecration have been duly observed; but the absence of a single one of these formalities,—the imposition of a bishop's hands,—makes null and void the ministry of every denomination, however characterized by truth and piety that ministry may be. One inference from which is,—an inference too practically carried out by many,—that the Romish church and the corrupt churches of the East, are to be acknowledged as "sister churches," "branches of the one true Apostolical church;" while all Protestant non-episcopal churches of every name, are to be discarded as no churches, and no fellowship or communion with them is to be tolerated. Some sentiments are so grossly absurd that a bare statement of them is the best possible refu-

Facts of this kind, going to show the entire severance of morality from religion, in the Eastern churches, might be mentioned almost without

tation. The dogma just named is of this character. The truth is, the notion of "succession," as being essential to a true church and a valid ministry, is a mere figment of the imagination, or as one "of their own order" calls it, the "stupidity and fables of Romanists." Just as if the imposition of a bishop's hands, by virtue of something no body knows what, derived by "succession" from the Apostles, no body knows how, could suffice to make a very good priest out of a graceless profligate, or a blacksmith thief, while for the want of that nameless something, communicated only by prelatical hands, no matter how impure and wicked, such ministers as Isaac Watts, Philip Doddridge, Robert Hall and Jonathan Edwards, indeed, the whole body of non-episcopal clergy in the world, are to be regarded as no ministers, mere intruders into the sacred office, and all ordinances administered by them are invalid and worthless. A sentiment like this is to be repudiated as ineffably foolish and absurd; the arguments against it are infinite, in favor of it nothing. "It is alike destitute of evidence, and an outrage on all christian charity." See Edinburgh Review, April, 1843. Article Puseyism.

It may be admitted, that church government is of divine appointment, an ordinance of God, just as civil government is,—that is, it is the will of God that his friends should be formed into societies with such officers and rules, as are adapted to secure the great object of their organization, the increase of personal holiness in their members, and the spread of true religion over the world. And that form of church government is

number. The truth is, as I have said, religion is there regarded as a thing by itself; having no connection whatever with life and manners.

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nearest the divine model, and most in accordance with the divine will, which is best adapted to promote the two fold object here specified. Neither in respect to civil or ecclesiastical government, is any precise form prescribed in the Scriptures. All forms of government are of divine authority, just in proportion as they are adapted to answer the great end or design of government, the improvement of the people in knowledge, virtue, piety and happiness. As the divine right of kings has been exploded as a relic of the dark ages, so the divine right of bishops, having the same origin, should be consigned to the same category.

Suppose that Nicholas, Autocrat of Russia, should rise up and claim that his is the only divinely authorized government in the world; that Louis Philippe, King of France, should do the same; and that the Queen of England, and the President of the United States, should put forth a like pretension, each claiming that his is the only government in the world, resting on divine authority. What would be thought of such a claim in this nineteenth century? It would be scouted as an absurdity too weak and foolish to be met with serious argument. How far from being worthy of the same treatment is the claim set forth by some professedly christian denominations, that theirs, respectively, is the only true church, theirs the only authorized ministry, and theirs the only valid ordinances? We expect this of Popery; we find it in the Greek church, and it is the very spirit of Mohammedism; but Protestants,—alas! that any should be found to

Hence, one may be a very good christian, and yet a very bad man. Persons notorious for profaneness, falsehood and licentiousness, are often most scrupulously exact in observing the appointed ceremonies of their church, and account it a sin hardly to be forgiven for one to take animal food on days set apart for fasting.

The various orders of clergy in the Oriental churches are, to a deplorable extent, a demoralized and wicked class of men. Great numbers of them

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advocate so anti-christian and pernicious a dogma. It is to offer a cool and deliberate insult to nineteen-twentieths of the christian people in this country; as much so as it would be for a petty political party to rise up in this land of the Puritans, and denounce their descendants as no citizens, mere intruders upon the soil and usurpers of the functions of government; though their fathers owned the soil, cleared it of its forests, defended it with their blood, and established the government and the schools and colleges, and various institutions which exist to bless the people as at this day. Let the dogma which thus unchurches all denominations of christians but one, and turns them over "to uncovenanted mercy," be put away, by all who call themselves Christians, as a shame and a reproach to the Christian name; and let love and fellowship flow forth towards all whom Christ loves, communes with, and is training up for heaven. To all such of whatever name, grace, mercy and peace be multiplied.

are sunk in gross ignorance, and in their general character, are a disgrace, not only to their sacred profession, but to common morality and decency. Preaching is far from being regarded as an important part of their duty. Their principal business is to perform mass, and say prayers for the people; and the prayers throughout all the East, both among Mohammedans and Christians, with the exception of the Greek Arabs in Syria, are in a language not at all understood by the people. This indeed is not thought in the least necessary. The proper idea of Eastern worship is, that of the priest performing service for the people. The priest is every thing; the people nothing; and in so far as it respects the utility and acceptableness of their worship, it makes no difference, whether they understand a word of the service or not. Indeed, I can hardly conceive of any thing in the form of religion more unintelligible, senseless and profitless, than the worship I have often witnessed in Greek, Armenian and Catholic churches. Instruction, none is given; it is all a round of unmeaning ceremonies, kissing the pictures, crossings, manipulations, genuflexions, burning incense, sprinkling holy water and the

like. Services, such as these, it is manifest, can have no good effect upon the people. They cannot enlighten the mind; they cannot quicken the conscience; they cannot sanctify the heart; they cannot improve the character, nor fit the soul for heaven. Christianity indeed, as understood and believed by the churches of the East, has lost its vital, saving principles. It is a dead letter; and the ministration of it, as it now prevails, is a ministration of absurdity and folly, serving only to keep the people in ignorance and sin. Regeneration is by baptism. This wipes away original sin, and all actual sin previously committed, and brings the subject into a state of grace and salvation. This delusive doctrine is held universally in the churches of the East; and of any other or more spiritual regeneration, as effected by the Spirit of God operating on the heart, both priests and people are profoundly ignorant. Justification is not by a living faith, but the observance of ceremonies; repentance is penance, confessing to the priest and doing what he prescribes; christian doctrine is what the church teaches; prayer is a mere matter of the lips, repeating words in an unknown tongue; the rule of faith is not the Bible, but tradition, or the decrees of councils;

holiness is observing the rites of the church, and whoever does this is pronounced a saint, and is sure of heaven. Add to these the dogmas of transubstantiation, worshipping the Virgin Mary, praying to the dead and for the dead, going on pilgrimages and the like; and you then have some faint idea of the religion of the East,—a mere pageant, a show, a thing without life and without power.* No wonder that the people where it prevails, are sunk in ignorance, are demoralized, superstitious, debased, and miserable in their temporal condition. In point of morals, the Turks, it is generally believed, are superior to their christian neighbors. But neither of them has much to boast on this score. The morals of both are deplorably low; and the religion of both, being a religion of dead forms, entirely without the power of godliness, has no tendency to reclaim them from the dominion of error and sin; or make them holy and happy, either in this world or in that which is to come. It is salt which has lost its savor, and is good for nothing.

4. The religion of the East, which is so abun-

* For a particular account of the doctrines and rites of the Armenian church, see Colman's Christian Antiquities, p. 466.

dant, so costly, and at the same time so worthless, has a strong hold on the minds of the people; and it is very difficult to draw them off from their attachment to it. The stability of Eastern customs is proverbial. The people are strongly averse to change in any thing; and especially so, in respect to their religion. The short argument by which they are wont to repel all attempts to convince them of the errors of their religious systems, and to persuade them to embrace a purer faith, is by saying, "our religion is that of our ancestors; it was good for them, and why should we change it for another?" It is to be remarked too, that the religions of which I am speaking, are wonderfully adapted to the corrupt nature of man. They gratify his pride and his selfishness; give indulgence to his appetites and passions, and at the same time, quiet his conscience and allay his fears, by securing for him a firm hope of happiness after death.

These religions, also, are maintained by the civil power; they are interwoven with the institutions and laws of the state; and the rites and ceremonies which they prescribe are sanctioned by the authority of government. This is especially

true of the religion of the Turks. It is established by law, and defection from it is punished with death. No Mohammedan can think of changing his religion but with the certain prospect of losing his head. This was universally the fact, till the early part of the last year, when an arrangement was made with the Porte, by some of the foreign ambassadors, in which it was stipulated that the barbarous law of the Koran, which punishes apostacy with death, should not hereafter be executed. Whether the arrangement will avail any thing in practice time must show.

It has been commonly supposed of late, that Mohammedism is losing its hold on the people; is waxing old and ready to vanish away. I have seen no evidence to convince me that this is the fact, at least on any large scale. It is true, indeed, that the Ottoman empire is decaying and becoming weak; and this may, in some sense, have an unfavorable effect on the religion of the empire. It is true also that the intercourse of foreigners, much more common now than formerly, together with the education of many of the Turkish youth in Europe, has tended to some extent, especially among the higher classes, to in-

troduce more liberal sentiments, and to shake the faith once reposed in the prophet. But by the great mass of the people throughout the empire, Mohammedism is as firmly believed and rigidly practiced as ever. It now holds sway over 140,000,000 of people, among whom there are probably not near as many infidels and sceptics, as among an equal number of people living in Christian lands.

The truth is Mohammedism has hitherto been walled in, as it were, from the whole civilized world. In its arrogance and bigotry, it has spurned at all light, and refused all intercourse with the science and learning of modern times. Its devotees are of course miserably ignorant, and in proportion to their ignorance, is the strength of their attachment to their faith. It is a faith too, which is taught them in their earliest years. It is associated with all the deepest impressions and thoughts of childhood and youth. The Turkish children spend their first years in the *harem*, with the women of the household, and there they are carefully instructed in the principles of their religion. Their education in the schools, so far as there are any, is conducted on the same

plan. The principal thing taught is the Koran; so that they grow up with Mohammedism engrained, as it were, into their very being; and it is the last thing they think of parting with, and in point of fact is the last thing which, in any circumstances, they can be persuaded to give up. The consequence is, very little has been attempted, and very little done, in the way of converting the followers of the false prophet.

The attachment of the different sects of christians in the East to their religious systems, is scarcely less tenacious and abiding. It often seemed to me, when there, that it is, in many respects, more difficult to introduce a pure gospel into the Oriental churches than among the nations of heathenism.* And so it has been found

* There is an infernal originality in apostate christianity; it is the master effort of the Prince of darkness. It sanctions error, by the declaration—*Thus saith Jehovah.* It conceals perdition under the sound of salvation. It transforms the church of Christ into a synagogue of Satan, and thus converts the blessings of God into curses, and draws an eternal poison from the well-springs of salvation. This is apostate christianity in the churches of the East. Can there be any thing more iniquitous or appalling, in the systems of Hindooism or barbarian polytheism? Is not Satan more ruinous, more fearful in his power, when he appears as an angel of light, than when he dis-

by actual experiment. Many heathen tribes have, by the labors of modern missionaries, been converted to Christ; but few, comparatively, in the corrupt churches of the East, have been drawn off from their errors and delusions to embrace a spiritual religion. The religious systems of the East are artfully and most successfully constructed to bewilder, corrupt and crush the human mind. They have enough of truth to give them an air of plausibility in the view of the ignorant and unreflecting. They appeal powerfully to the senses and imagination. They have pictures and images, and pageants of various kinds. They have many holidays for the amusement of the people, and many processions and pompous shows for the same purpose. They have a priesthood gorgeously arrayed, and apostolically descended. They have splendid churches, richly ornamented, and numerous rites and ceremonies, and all things grand and imposing in the view of an illiterate, pleasure loving people. All this display of pomp and grandeur and sacredness, it should be remember-

covers himself in his true character of a fiend of darkness?—*Hartley's Researches*, p. 79.

ed, is kept continually before the eyes of the people. They see it from childhood upwards. They are taken, as soon as they can walk, and led into the churches, and there, as I have often seen, are taught to kneel before the pictures, to kiss them, and to go through the various forms of worship, and thus these forms are associated with their earliest thoughts and feelings, and in riper years, come to exert a most powerful and unresisted sway over them. Added to all the common belief that adherence to their particular church is essential to salvation; that damnation is sure to follow every heretic; and then the sleepless vigilance of a jealous and bigoted priesthood, ready to take the alarm at the discovery of the least inclination to change, and to excommunicate and persecute unto death all who do change their faith or go out from their fold,—take into view all these things, and you will not be surprised that the religion of the East has a very strong hold on the minds of the people; and that to break that hold and bring the people to the knowledge and love of the truth, requires a power which none but God can exert. But this brings before us a subject which may occupy our attention at another time.

And now, as we review the picture which has been presented,—and many, very many even darker shades might be added; how affecting the thought that these corrupt and corrupting systems of religion prevail over the very lands, where the pure gospel was once triumphant; where churches were formed by the Apostles themselves; where patriarchs and prophets lie entombed; where the Saviour taught and wrought miracles, and where he died for the world's redemption? How great, how melancholy the change! Age after age, Christianity, in its primitive character, has ceased from these lands. 'Doctrine has become corrupt; discipline has disappeared; morality is no more. Apostacy is stamped upon the churches which once shone as lights in the world. Where idol temples once fell, and where they still attest, by their ruins, the resistless force of primitive Christianity, the visible temple of God has fallen, and great has been the fall of it. So total has been the demolition, that the very language of our Saviour, descriptive of the ruin of another temple, has become too applicable to this edifice,' —*not one stone is left upon another, that is not thrown down.*

What now was the cause of this disastrous overthrow, of this wide spread apostacy, of this incoming of a false and spurious religion? A great question; one which would well repay a careful investigation; but time forbids me to enter upon it now. I will only touch upon a few points. It may be admitted that the churches planted by the Apostles were, comparatively, pure both in doctrine and practice. But long before the death of the last of the Apostles, the mystery of iniquity had began to work. False teachers came in and corrupted the churches from the simplicity of their faith. They insisted upon the observance of forms and ceremonies, and times and seasons; taught the necessity of circumcision in order to be saved, and revived various rites of the Mosaic law, which had been done away by the gospel. This process went on, till rites and forms came to take the place of spiritual religion, and men began to be satisfied with a round of pious observances. Then the churches began to assume an air of pomp and show, and ceremony. Their worship, no longer simple, spiritual, proceeding from the heart, became complicated, gorgeous, showy; various orders of priesthood were introduced

from one to three, and then to seven and nine, as in the Greek and Armenian churches; and pride, ambition, envy and jealousy, followed of course. Then to conciliate the favor of the heathen and make christianity palatable to their taste, various of *their* rites were introduced into the church, only baptizing them with a christian name; heathen philosophy usurped the place of christian doctrine; spirituality decayed and died under a load of senseless forms and outward observances; the clergy, instead of performing their sacred functions in simplicity of faith and prayer, holding forth the word of life to enlighten the people, became proud, luxurious, worldly, indolent, ignorant; and so things went on from bad to worse, till at length, in the close of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century, the churches, having lost well nigh all spirituality in worship and soundness in doctrine, and split up and divided among themselves, were prepared to embrace any form of error and adopt any kind of worship. Then the Mohammedan delusion burst forth like a tempest and swept every thing before it. The effects of its terrible power are now seen in the corrupt and dead forms of religion, which prevail

throughout the East. Whoever is acquainted with the state of the christian church in that part of the world when Mohammedism took its rise, cannot be surprised at its speedy and complete triumph over all those lands where the gospel once prevailed with so much purity and power. Nor will he be surprised at the present condition of the churches in those lands. The dreadful change that has come over them commenced far back; commenced in declension, in a loss of spirituality, in substituting the form for the power of godliness; and now the spirit of life, having for centuries departed from them, they lie wrapped in the winding sheet of dead forms, sending forth only exhalations to poison and impregnate with death the whole moral atmosphere around them. It is indeed a profound mystery in providence, that the delusions of the false prophet, and the corruptions of a dead christianity should have been permitted to spread their baleful influence over those fair and goodly lands, where divine truth once shone with so much brightness, and religion prevailed with so great purity and power. But however unable we may be to explain the mystery of the fact, the process of the change is perfectly obvious,—declension, loss of spirituality,

formalism, death. This is the process by which the churches of the East were corrupted and destroyed. Let us, my friends, take warning. We stand by faith. Let us not be high minded, but fear. For if God spared not the churches planted by the Apostles, when they departed from him, but gave them up to error and delusion, let us beware lest falling into the same sin, he spare not us, but abandon us to the same fearful judgment. No church that has lost its spirituality and become cold and formal in worship, has the least security against the coming in of error and delusion, worldliness and sin, in their most destructive form. And no individual Christian, who departs from God, ever knows where he shall stop, or when he shall return. Than such departure, no sin is more subtle, none more dangerous, whether in respect to a church collectively, or its individual members. It steals the heart away from God, begets coldness in his worship and indifference to his glory; then the Spirit is grieved away; all becomes fruitless and dead; and in this state, the great adversary is sure to be present to do his work; to sow the seeds of error and sin, and lead souls captive at his will.

Let all take warning. God is true to his word. Mark again the process of ruin to the ancient churches of the East,—declension, loss of spirituality, formalism, death. Hear too the solemn and monitory language, once addressed to two of these churches, by the faithful and true Witness—*I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first love. Repent therefore and do thy first works; else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of its place, except thou repent.* This was said of the church of Ephesus. How solemn the warning; how awful the execution of the threatening! The light of Ephesus has long since become extinct. Not a living being now resides there bearing the Christian name. It is described as a solemn and most forlorn spot. A passing shepherd, or wandering Turkoman occasionally pitches his tent for a night among the fallen houses; else all is dreary, waste, and silent as the house of death, except only when the stillness is broken by the mournful cry of the jackal echoed from the mountain, and the night hawk and shrill owl flitting around the ruins. This is the place where Paul, and John, and Timothy once taught and prayed, and broke

the bread of life to a large and flourishing church. The sin charged upon the church was leaving first love; and refusing to repent when warned of danger, punishment came and its light went out in darkness.

To another church it was said,—I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot; so then because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. This too has had an awful fulfilment, and Laodicea, a miserable, deserted ruin, remains now only to attest how great and how dangerous is the sin of lukewarmness, and how sure is God to execute his threatenings, against all who depart from him, and refuse to hear his voice calling to repentance. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.*

OBSTACLES

TO THE

SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL IN THE EAST.

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When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.—LUKE 11: 21, 22.

My object, in the present discourse, is, first, to point out some of the obstacles to the propagation of the pure gospel in the Oriental churches; and, second, to consider what reasons we have to hope for ultimate success.

Our text is a proper introduction to this subject. It was uttered by our blessed Lord in vindication of himself from the blasphemous charge of acting in concert with Satan, the arch enemy of God and man. This charge was brought against him by his enemies, in consequence of his healing a demoniac, which, they asserted, he effected through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils. Our Lord replies by showing the absurdity of supposing

that Satan would act against himself, or exert his power for the destruction of his own kingdom. Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and a house divided against a house falleth. If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub. And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore shall they be your judges. But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God has come upon you. Then follows our text.—When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

Our Saviour here distinctly recognizes the existence and agency of a mighty spirit of evil, whose power was terribly exerted to blind the minds of men, and hold them in subjection to his will. He also intimates that *he* had come with power mightier than his, to take from him his armor, his strength, set his captives free and destroy his kingdom. Some, I am aware, affect

to sneer at satanic agency, as a fiction, and regard what the scriptures say of the devil, and fallen angels, as eastern allegory. But aside from the full and explicit declarations of the Bible in contradiction of such a notion, it seems to me, I must confess, extremely difficult to account for many of the complicated, extended and deadly systems of evil in our world, without admitting an agency, far more sagacious, wide-reaching and powerful, than man can exert.

While passing through the different countries I visited in the East, scarcely any scripture occurred to my mind more frequently than the one selected as my text. I saw such influences at work on every side to corrupt, brutalize, and destroy the souls of men; systems of evil, 'so methodized, so interlocked, so all-pervading, and wielded with such comprehension of plan and such dreadful power,' that I could not doubt, for a moment, the existence and agency of the devil. I felt with a vividness of impression never before realized, that a strong man armed was keeping his palace, and holding terrible sway over the minds of men in that part of the world, and that no hope of deliverance could be derived from any

quarter, but from the coming of one, mightier than he to bind him, and take from him his usurped possessions. But this is a general view. I must descend to particulars. Among the obstacles then which oppose the propagation of pure christianity in the East, I mention,

I. The union of church and state; the intermingling of civil and ecclesiastical power. The effect of this, wherever it exists, is first to corrupt the church, and then to prevent reformation. It was an evil day for the church, when, in the reign of Constantine, it was taken under his royal patronage, and, in a sense, became united with the state. What it gained in protection from persecution, and in outward prosperity, it lost and more than lost, in purity of doctrine, and spirituality of character and power. Popery had its birth in that union; and continued to grow and spread, till it brought on the dark ages; and to the present day, the disastrous effects of the connection of the church with the state are visible in all the countries of Europe and of the East. In Italy, for example,—and the same is true in all papal countries—the civil power stands armed to resist every attempt to reform the abuses of the

church, and to extend to the people the blessings of education and of pure religion. Were it not for this power, sustained as it is by Austrian interference and Austrian bayonets, the pope could not hold his place a month. Italy would be free and accessible to light. So in Greece, the union of church and state is entire. The civil power claims the right of supreme control in all matters of religious instruction and worship; and acting through the medium of a corrupt priesthood, it raises formidable barriers against all innovation or change in the established religion of the country. Hence a few years since a law was passed, requiring that the catechism of the Greek church should be taught in all the schools of the kingdom. The consequence was, that our missionaries, feeling that they could not, conscientiously, teach that catechism, as it inculcated the worship of the virgin Mary and various other errors, were obliged to disband numerous flourishing schools, then under their direction, and send back the children to ignorance and delusion. By an article introduced into the new constitution, in 1844, and finally adopted by a large majority of the convention, all proselytism from the Greek church

is strictly prohibited; meaning by proselytism, all attempts, whether by preaching, the circulation of books, or other means, to enlighten the people and convert them from their errors to a purer faith. This article, it was hoped, would not be carried into execution; and as yet it has not been; but there it is, an established principle in the constitution of the kingdom, and can at any time be brought to bear in the banishment of every protestant missionary and teacher from the country.

In Turkey, Mohammedism is the established religion of the empire. The Koran is the supreme law of the land, civil, political and religious; and it thus arrays the whole civil and ecclesiastical power of the empire in opposition to the gospel. Till recently no Mohammedan could think of changing his religion but with the certain prospect of being put to death; and this punishment for the crime of apostacy has hitherto been inflicted with terrible certainty.

In regard to the native christian sects residing in the country, they are allowed to retain their faith and worship, only by the payment of a liberal tribute to the Sultan. They are called, in

the proper language of the country, *rayah*, which means a flock, pastured for the sake of the fleece; and most cruelly are they fleeced by their Turkish oppressors. They are not permitted to build or repair any place of public worship without a firman from the Sultan. He decides too what color their houses shall be painted, what dress they shall wear, and what price shall be paid for articles of food in the market; and whenever passion, caprice, or covetousness, move him to the deed, he has only to say the word, and any christian subject, whom he has marked as a victim, is liable at once to be despatched, and his property seized. This creates great insecurity of person and estate. The people know not what to expect. There is no uniformity or steadiness in the government administered over them; except that they are always exposed to oppression and wrong. This gives rise to frequent revolts and revolutions in different parts of the country. The people are continually plotting how they shall evade the unrighteous exactions imposed upon them, and resist the power of the pashas and governors sent by the Sultan to ride over them. You will easily see that a state of things, such as has now been

described, must be exceedingly unfavorable to the propagation of the gospel. A people crushed down by the hand of oppression, living in fear and in total uncertainty as to what is before them, can with great difficulty be persuaded to listen to the messages of the gospel, so as to embrace them in sincerity and truth.

2. The power of the priests presents another obstacle to the propagation of pure christianity among the people of the East. It is difficult for us, in this country, to conceive of the extent of this power. It seems all-pervading; reaching all the relations of life, and sending its influence deep into the soul. The people grow up under it, fear it, and dare not resist it. The patriarchs and bishops, both of the Greek and Armenian churches, are clothed with civil, as well as ecclesiastical power. They have their courts, and their prisons, and their instruments of punishment; this is especially true of the patriarchs; and they are by no means backward to use their power to restrain and punish any who may transgress the laws of the church, or discover a disposition to inquire after the truth as it is in the Bible. I cannot express to you the

emotions which were awakened in my bosom, when, on arriving at Smyrna, I was informed that an Armenian priest had just been thrown into the patriarch's prison, at Constantinople, for preaching the gospel, and circulating religious books among the people. He was afterwards liberated, but was threatened with banishment, if he persevered in the course for which he had been imprisoned. I afterwards became acquainted with him, and formed a favorable opinion of his character, as a man of a sound mind, and of devoted piety. I need not say that he remained firm.

The priests of every grade in the Oriental churches, as did the priests of Diana, at Ephesus, feel themselves interested to keep things as they are. They are averse to all change. They know that their influence with the people depends on keeping them in ignorance. Hence they are opposed to schools, and to the circulation of the scriptures and other books. It often seemed to me, when in that country, that one of the greatest obstacles to the spread of the gospel there, is the opposition which is made to it by a worldly, corrupt, and degraded priesthood. They stand

at the avenues of light, and throw back, as far as they can, every ray which is presented for the illumination of the people. And so great is the ignorance and superstition of the people, that the priests hold almost unlimited sway over them. The terror of excommunication is almost like that of perdition. By multitudes the priest is thought to hold in his hand the keys of life and of death; and as his services are deemed essential to salvation, there is the greatest dread of incurring his displeasure. A threat from him to withhold absolution from a penitent, or baptism from a child, or his priestly service in the burial of the dead, is terrible, in the view of the people in general, beyond what you can imagine, and seldom fails, unless the offender be a true christian, to bring him to submission.

Intimately connected with this is the dread of separation from the church or community to which the people belong. For a Turk to do this is not only to expose himself to decapitation, but to certain exclusion from the paradise of the prophet, and consignment to the fires of hell. This he is taught from his earliest childhood, and it holds him, as with the power of fate, firm to his creed.

The same, substantially, is true of those who belong to the different christian sects. They naturally dread separation as the greatest of evils. Hence, when any one shows a disposition to adopt a different creed, or unite with a different denomination from that in which he was brought up, his friends and relatives are alarmed, as if some evil spirit had seized him; and if he finally separates and goes away from them, they bemoan him as one who has dishonored them, and is lost to all hope of salvation. No pains are spared, in the first instance, to prevent his separation; and when he has separated, no pains are spared, whether by entreaties, by threats or persecutions, to bring him back.

I have many affecting facts which I might mention to illustrate what I here say; but time will not permit. You have all heard of the power of caste among the Hindoos; how it divides the people into distinct classes, or sects, and raises an impassable barrier between them. There is something very analagous to this among the churches of the East. To lose caste in one of these churches, is to lose the soul; to separate from them is to separate from salvation. This is the common opinion; and as among the heathen, so among

the christians of the East, the power of caste, as I call it, operates with terrible effect to shut out from them the light and blessings of the pure gospel.

3. Another obstacle to the propagation of the gospel in the East, is found in the broken, fragmentary state of society that exists there. You do not find there, as you do in our country, one homogeneous people, speaking the same language, and bound together by the ties of a common interest and country. But you find a strangely mingled people, collected from all parts of the earth, speaking different languages, and separated from each other by extreme jealousy and hostility.* They have no bond of social sympathy drawing them into a oneness of character, of interest and aim, and qualifying them to coöperate in plans for mutual improvement. They are divided and kept asunder by innumerable dissocial, repellent influences, and the missionary is obliged to carry on his work, chiefly, by acting on individuals. He cannot hope to move, at once, by a common effort, the mass of the people. He has rather to take a particular class,

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* See page 30.

and select individuals from that class, and patiently instruct them, as it were, one by one, and in this, what would seem to us slow process, build up a spiritual kingdom, in the midst of surrounding jealousy, formalism and deadness. The light thus kindled in the bosoms of individuals, will gradually permeate the masses to which they belong; and it may be hoped, that these masses, as the Armenians and Druses, for example, will in the end be moved and moulded by the power of the gospel. But the process, in such a state of society, insulated, broken up into fragments, must be slow and peculiarly laborious.

4. The people are exceedingly degraded in ignorance, superstition and selfishness. How can it be otherwise under a despotism like that of Turkey, which seeks only to oppress and grind the people in the dust? It often seemed to me, especially while traveling in Syria, that human nature, as I saw it around me, had reached its lowest point of degradation and misery. I was assured however, by our excellent missionary, Rev. Mr. Smith, who was my fellow traveler in that wretched country, that the Copts, the common people of Egypt, were still more degraded

and miserable, as were great numbers whom he had seen in Armenia. It was difficult for me to see how this was possible, and society continue to exist. Not a newspaper published in all Syria; not a book-store, so far as I could learn, except those connected with our missions, and very few schools of any kind for the instruction of the young. The people, living in constant oppression, and fear of what may come upon them, do not think of improvement or look beyond their present wants. Hence their towns and villages are rapidly going to decay; and so long have they been compelled, as it were, to save their lives, and gain a subsistence by the practice of falsehood and fraud, that these have become universal habits, and are scarcely regarded as at all improper or sinful. Truth is utterly fallen in the streets, and equity cannot enter. The idea of disinterested benevolence seems to have no place in the minds of the people. Show them a kindness, do them a favor, and they at once suspect some selfish motive. Hence the common impression among them is, that our missionaries are there on some enterprise of selfish gain; and when they are asked to send their children to the

schools, opened for their instruction, they frequently expect a reward for so doing, on the ground that the whole is a money-getting affair.

It seems to them incredible, that people in this country, moved simply by a desire to do good, should make such efforts for their happiness; or that missionaries, with no hope of gain, should be willing to leave country and home, and come and spend their lives in seeking their salvation. And it is only after they have had much intercourse with the missionaries, and have become acquainted with their plans and operations, that they admit the idea of their disinterestedness. It seems, in a great measure, a new and strange idea to them, so universally are they accustomed to see men act only from selfishness. I need not add, that this idea, when once admitted to their minds, wins powerfully on their confidence, and renders them easily accessible to missionary influence.

The remarks now made apply particularly to Syria. In Turkey, the people, as a general fact, are less degraded; are in a more promising social and moral state. This is particularly true of the Armenians, who are by far the most hopeful sub-

jects of missionary labor, to be found in all the East. But even among them, common education is very little known, and not at all among the females; and the great mass of the people are sunk very low in ignorance and superstition, in intellectual and moral degradation, so that much, very much preparatory work is to be done in their behalf, before the gospel can be expected to prevail among them in purity and power.

5. I mention one other obstacle to the propagation of the gospel in the East, greater in some respects than any I have yet named; it is the universal reliance of the people upon forms and ceremonies; their strong attachment to the ancient rites and observances of their respective churches. It is a remarkable characteristic of superstition and formalism, wherever they exist, to bind their devotees in firm attachment to their prescriptions. This is true of every system of idolatry and false religion on earth; and it is seen in all its power among the people of the East. The Turks are universally high churchmen; that is, they are extremely bigoted and exclusive in their attachment to their form of religion, and

consign to certain destruction all who are not of the faith of their prophet.*

The several sects of nominal christians, are each confident, that theirs is the only true church, and theirs the only valid ministry and ordinances; and salvation is no where certain but in their communions respectively. The foolish idea of Apostolical succession as essential to a duly au-

* The religion of Mohammedans naturally makes them proud, and leads them to despise all who are not of their faith. "The prayers of the infidel (the christian) are not prayers, but wanderings," says the koran "I withdraw my foot, and turn away my face," says Mohammed, "from a society in which the faithful are mixed with the ungodly." The spirit breathed in this language is not extinguished, nor even weakened, by the death of its object. "Pray not for those whose death is eternal," is a precept of the Mohammedan church; and "defile not thy feet by passing over the graves of men, the enemies of God and his prophet." These precepts are precise and positive; and they regulate the principles and conduct of all classes of Mussulmans. They are seldom troubled with terrors of conscience. Their firm belief is that all Mohammedans are safe; that the divine favor is never withdrawn from those who are steadfast in their profession of faith, and constant in their practice of religious rites. The belief and the performance of both are simple and easy, and not only may exist unconnected with virtue, but may seem to expiate vicious conduct, and so keep the conscience quiet in the midst of great moral delinquencies.—*See Thornton on Turkey, vol. 2. p.* 107–117.

thorized ministry, is common in all the Oriental churches; and the people are taught from their childhood up, that if they observe the rites and ceremonies of their church, their salvation is certain. Tradition has taken the place of the Bible; the dogmas of men are received for the teachings of God's word.* Regeneration is effected by baptism; justification is by the observance of ceremonies; repentance is penance, or doing what the priest enjoins as an offset for sin; faith is believing what the church teaches; and while the highest idea entertained of holiness is in the tithing of mint, annis and cummin, or in observing prescribed rites and forms, no sin is thought so deadly, as to renounce connection with the church, and embrace the heresy of protestantism; that is, the pure, spiritual religion of the Bible, in opposition to the doctrines of tradition and rites of human invention.

That a people trained under the influence of such a system, with no means of general education, and no Bible in their hands to enlighten and guide them, should cherish strong prejudices, and look with distrust upon all attempts to convert

* See page 23.

them to a purer faith, is only what might be naturally expected; and it is what in fact is witnessed all over the eastern world. There the strong man armed keeps his palace, and his goods are in peace. The powers of darkness have for centuries established their sway over the minds of men in that part of the world, and bound them down in chains of extreme ignorance, superstition and debasement.

I have dwelt too long on this part of the subject. And yet I feel that I have given you but a very imperfect view of the obstacles which oppose the progress of the gospel in the countries whose moral and intellectual state has been under review. Let us now inquire,

II. What encouragement there is to attempt to send the gospel to the people in those countries.

1. It is an obvious remark, that the power of God is equal to the overthrow of the obstacles that have been named, and to open a free course for his gospel to run and be glorified. We preach, and you profess to believe the doctrine of the Holy Spirit's influence, as indispensable to the conversion of the human heart. This sentiment is often held *here* as mere theory; but the chris-

tian feels it, in the countries of the East, to be a solemn reality.

As I passed through those countries, I was often filled with amazement, at the wide-spread and dreadful moral desolations which I every where witnessed. I could not doubt, as I have said, the agency of the great enemy of God and man, as employed in producing these desolations. I frequently seemed to myself to be in the situation of the prophet, when in vision he was set down in the midst of a vast valley full of bones, which were dry, very dry. When the question occurred, can these bones live, I could only answer, in the prophet's language, Lord God, thou knowest. I saw distinctly, that all human power is utterly inadequate to accomplish the desired change. But what the power of man cannot do, the power of God can do, *and it will;* for so the divine promises encourage us to believe. Those lands, once pressed by the footsteps of prophets and apostles, and of the Saviour himself, though now shrouded in deep moral darkness, and given up to the dominion of Satan, are surely included in the covenant, which promises, that Christ shall have the heathen for his inheritance, and the

uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. One stronger than the strong man armed is on his way to the conquest of the world, and ere long we may rest assured, he will come upon him and overcome him; take from him his armor wherein he trusted, and divide his spoils.

2. The gospel *has* broken down just such obstacles as now exist in the East, and cleared a way for its successful triumph. In primitive times it spread its conquests over these very lands, then under the dominion of idolatry, and of a corrupt Judaism, as difficult, surely, to eradicate, as any of the forms of false religion which now prevail there. And though a mysterions providence has permitted that the light, which once shone so bright there, should be obscured and in a great measure extinguished by the overflowings of error and delusion; still in what the gospel once did on that theatre of its early triumphs, we have a pledge of what it can and will do again, when it shall be sent forth to the people, in purity and power, with the attending influence of God's spirit. That gospel, which in the space of three hundred years, banished idolatry from the vast empire of Rome; that gospel, which converted

our wild Saxon ancestors from their bloody druidical worship, to the love and service of the true God; that gospel, which smote the arm of popery at the Reformation, and delivered so many of the nations of Europe from its thraldom; which has wrought such wonders in our day in Greenland, at the Society and Sandwich Islands, and in many parts of Southern Africa and India,—that gospel is surely invested with a power, which needs only to be rightly wielded, to spread its victories over all the Turkish empire, banish the delusions of the false prophet, and the various forms of corrupt christianity now prevailing there, and every where set up its banner of light and love, of peace, and joy, and salvation.

All that is necessary to the achievement of this grand conquest, is only to give the gospel an open field of combat; is to bring it into direct contact with the various existing systems of error and sin. Let this be done, and the obstacles I have enumerated will melt away, as night flees before the rising sun, and divine light will again spread over all the lands so long enveloped in the darkness and shadow of death.

3. A very happy beginning has already been made in the great work of reviving pure religion in the lands that have been under review. But little, it is true, has, as yet, been done in behalf of the Mohammedans. Their bigotry, together with the fear of the cimiter, has hitherto shut them out from christian effort. The scriptures have been translated into their language, and to some extent, circulated among them. But success has been small. Indeed it has seemed utterly in vain, in the view of those who have been longest on the ground, to attempt the conversion of Moslems, while they have before them such miserable examples of religious character, as are exhibited by native christians around them. The ungodly lives, the bad morals, and the degrading superstitions of these christians, fully convinced me, that *they* must be reformed, before any thing can be successfully done to make Mohammedans think well of the gospel, or engage them to give their attention to it. All they now see is only adapted to make them despise it.

In regard to the Greeks, though the success of efforts made in their behalf has been less than was reasonably anticipated, and though missionaries

have felt themselves obliged, for the present, to withdraw, in a great measure, from this field, still it would be wrong to conclude that no good has been done. The whole Greek nation is in a very different state from what it would have been in, had no missionaries been sent to them. General education has received a very happy impulse; many have been instructed in useful learning and the Bible; some have been converted, and numerous copies of the scriptures and other religious books have been widely scattered among the people; and these means of divine knowledge and salvation will not, we may rest assured, be lost, but will exert an important influence in the future regeneration of Greece.

Then with respect to the Armenians, the Nestorians, the Druses on Mount Lebanon, and the Arabs of Syria, our missionaries are pursuing their work among them with very encouraging tokens of success. Since they first entered the country, some fifteen years ago, a great and most happy change has taken place in their condition and prospects. Then every thing was new and strange to them; they were unacquainted with the manners and habits of the people, and with their lan-

guage, laws and religion. Now they know the ground they occupy, understand the character of the people, and can speak to them, in their own tongue, of the wonderful works of God. Then they had no Bible in the language of the people, and no books for their instruction, and no printing press. Now they have Bibles and books in abundance, and the means of multiplying, through the press, copies of both, to any extent they please. Then they had no schools and no seminaries of learning, in which to instruct the young and train them up for usefulness and God. Now they have numerous schools, and hundreds of children and youth, in a course of christian instruction, and two higher seminaries in which to fit young men to become teachers and ministers. Then they were universally regarded with jealousy and distrust, and found it difficult to gain access to the people. Now they have the entire confidence of a large circle of acquaintances and friends, and free access to as many individuals and families as they can find time and strength to visit and instruct in the knowledge of salvation. Then they had no converts, whom they could draw around them in fellowship and communion, and employ as helpers in their great and arduous

work. Now they have many who give pleasing evidence of piety, to whom they break the bread of life, and who, in various ways, are found very useful in promoting the cause of salvation among their countrymen. Then they were frequently exposed to vexatious interruptions from priests and men in power; and to persecutions and violence in their persons and families. Now all these things have, in a great measure, passed away, and as a general fact, they are allowed to pursue their work, having none to molest or make them afraid.

In a village on Mount Lebanon, where a few years since Mr. Smith, our missionary, was hooted and stoned as he passed along the streets, I with my fellow traveler slept, and visited many of the villagers in their houses, with no more feeling of insecurity than in my own habitation. The changes here indicated are very great. The missionaries, who have seen and marked them in their progress, often spoke of them with wonder and gratitude; and all of us should gather from them strong encouragement, in regard to the ultimate success of our efforts to revive religion in the East. The numerous little fires, that are now

being kindled in different and far distant parts of the country, will continue to brighten and spread, till light shall penetrate all the dark places in the land, and the people shall move in masses to renounce their superstitions, and embrace the pure gospel.

4. There are many other causes, besides those directly connected with christian missions, which are operating to change the whole moral and religious, and I might add, the whole civil and political aspect of the East. To form a just estimate of the nature and power of these causes, one needs to contemplate them on the ground. Turkey, the grand seat and center of Mohammedan power, seems doomed ere long to dismemberment. Indeed this dismemberment has already commenced in the loss of many of its provinces, and in the continual decay of the power by which it retains its dominion over others. The power of Turkey is every where declining; and she can never regain what she has lost. The Turks cannot change. Their religion and government, their social and domestic habits, their ignorance, their superstition, their bigotry, indeed the whole frame and order of society among them, have

been stereotyped now these four hundred years. Their civilization, if so you must call it, has scarcely advanced at all beyond what it was when they entered Constantinople, four centuries ago; and they are just so far back of the spirit of the age. The consequence is, they are in no respect able to compete with modern civilization, or withstand those influences, which are continually crowding upon them from all the nations of christendom, and which, irresistibly, operate to supplant them in their power, in their business, and in the possession of their country and their homes. It is an ancient tradition with them, that they are one day to be driven out of Europe. Nothing seems more probable.

In the mean time, light from every quarter is bursting upon Turkey. Every steamboat that visits her ports conveys it: every traveler spreads it. The civilization of the West can no longer be shut out from the East by Turkish bigotry and fanaticism. Its influence is felt, and will be felt, more and more, in breaking up barbarous customs, in restraining the hand of violence and persecution, and in making the people acquainted with the blessings of knowledge, of liberty and religion. And whatever may be the fate of the

Turks as a nation, or however they may resist the process of change, that is going on among them; one thing is certain to result from that change, and that is, free access to all the different sects of native christians in the empire, with full liberty to publish to them the pure gospel of Christ. Every year is increasing the facilities of intercourse with the East, and multiplying the means by which we may establish there the spiritual kingdom of Christ. And whoever is acquainted with the state of things in that part of the world, or observes the pointings of prophecy and of providence in respect to it, cannot doubt, that it is ere long to be the seat of great and wonderful changes; changes affecting the whole frame and aspect of society, and which will result in casting down tyranny, oppression, and the various forms of false religion, and establishing the reign of freedom, righteousness, peace and salvation. This glorious consummation may not be in our day; but it is hastening on; it will come; and if we may but advance it, even in the smallest degree, by any efforts and prayers of ours, let not those efforts and prayers be withheld. It will be pleasant, when the battle is fought and the

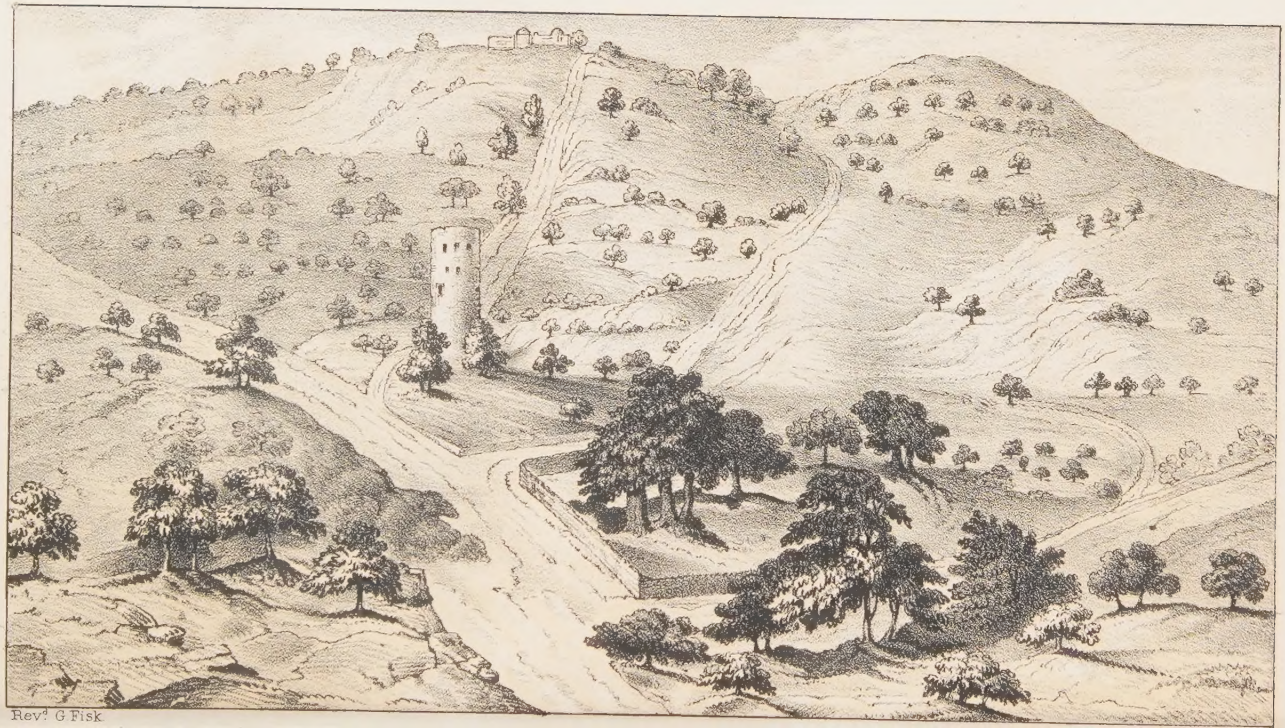
victory is won, to reflect, even though we may be in heaven, that we contributed any thing by our agency, towards so great and so blessed an achievement.

In the mean time, let us not forget our beloved missionary brethren, who are now laboring in that land of darkness and the shadow of death, to build up there the kingdom of our Saviour. They are true hearted, faithful, christian men; willing to spend and be spent in the service of their Master, and for the salvation of perishing men around them. They are pursuing their work in the only way, I believe, in which it can be accomplished; not as sectarians, but as the servants of Christ; not to build up a party, but to advance the cause of pure religion; to convert souls to the Saviour, and train them up for heaven. They believe, what I know to be true, that the churches of the East are radically corrupt; rotten to the very core; and though proud in their apostolically descended priesthood, and in their gorgeous forms and ceremonies, are utterly dead, as to all spiritual life and power. This being so, our missionaries feel, that they cannot fall in with their rites, nor encourage their forms, nor hope

to produce a reformation from within. They believe, that a true, spiritual reformation must begin from without; must begin as did the reformation in the days of our Saviour, and in the times of Luther; begin in preaching the pure gospel, in bringing sinners to repentance, and then forming them into churches, which shall be spiritual bodies, animated with the faith and love of Christ as their head. This is the way in which our brethren in the East are striving to accomplish the great work for which they have been sent there. It is, I must think, the right way; it approves itself, I doubt not, to your christian judgment, as it does, we know, by many manifest tokens of success, to the approbation and favor of the God of Missions.

Let me then, in behalf of our brethren in the East, invoke your prayers for them, and your confidence and love towards them. They are doing a great work. Their discouragements and trials are many, and it will greatly lighten their toils, and cheer their hearts, to know that they and their work are remembered in the prayers of christians in America.

RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS OF PALESTINE AND JERUSALEM.



Rev.d G Fisk

RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS OF PALESTINE AND JERUSALEM.

For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land; a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil-olive, and honey; a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass.—DEUTERONOMY 8: 7, 8, 9.

But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day,—that the Lord shall send upon thee cursing, vexation and rebuke, in all that thou settest thy hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings whereby thou hast forsaken me.—And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.—DEUTERONOMY 28: 15.—20: 23, 24.

And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, if thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round and keep thee in on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.—LUKE 19: 41, 42, 43, 44.

THESE Scriptures, taken together, present a most graphic picture of the land of Palestine, as it once was under the smiles of a beneficent providence, and in the possession of an obedient peo-

ple; and of what that same land now is, under the frowns of a righteous God, executing judgments upon a disobedient and rebellious people. The truth of this remark will fully appear in the sequel of this discourse.

It has often been observed, that the remembrances of travel are wont to be more interesting and pleasant than the reality. I find this to be true in my own case. The passing days of the last few weeks* found me, a year ago, traveling in Syria and Palestine, visiting Jerusalem and the sacred places in and around the city. These days, as they have recurred, have, each in succession, carried me back to the scenes I then passed through; and the impressions made on my mind by those scenes have been revived with a vividness I had never anticipated. My whole journey from Beirût to Sidon and Tyre, along the shore of the Mediterranean, thence across the southern slope of mount Lebanon to Safet and the sea of Tiberias, and on through Galilee and Samaria to Jerusalem, I have traveled over again, and with emotions even more intense than I felt, amid the toils of journeying and the constant

* Delivered Sabbath Evening, May 4th.

succession of new objects of interest. Hills and valleys, mountains and plains, deep ravines and narrow precipitous path-ways, the wild look of the inhabitants, shepherds tending their flocks, Bedouins encamped under their long black tents, watching their flocks or sweeping over the fields on their fleet coursers, together with the nameless and countless incidents of every day's travel through so strange a land, and among so strange a people—all, all has risen afresh to my mind, as the days have returned on which I performed the journey; and, while I was thus mentally retracing my steps, and living over the past, the thought occurred, that it might be pleasant and useful to communicate to my friends some of the impressions made on my mind by the presence of localities and objects, so deeply interesting as those to which I have referred.

Interesting they certainly are in a very eminent degree. No spot on earth is historically associated with such stupendous events as Palestine. Though small in territory, and connected with no commanding sea-port mart, or inland navigation, it has been the center of influences more deeply affecting the condition and prospects of the hu-

man race, than any that have originated in the greatest and most powerful nations of the earth. *There*, nearly two thousand years before the coming of Christ, God in covenant with Abraham, fixed the future heritage of his chosen people. There he established them, after having conducted them from Egypt by the hand of Moses, and cast out the heathen to prepare a place for them. There, for fifteen hundred years, he reigned over them as their God and King; and under his wise and paternal theocracy, they became a great, a happy and a powerful people. He protected them by the arm of his special providence, while they were obedient to his laws; and punished them with severe judgments, when they departed from him. There patriarchs, prophets and apostles were inspired to make known the character and ways of the Eternal to the children of men; there they lived and labored and died; and there, in that land of promise, rest their mortal remains till the great resurrection-day. There the Saviour of the world was born; in that land he traveled and taught and wrought miracles, and there, without the gates of the Holy City, he suffered and died, and from the mount of Olives, in

its immediate vicinity, he ascended to glory. Wherever you travel in Palestine, or on whatever side you turn your eyes, you continually meet with objects and scenes of the deepest interest, on account of their historical associations; and though the land is now barren and waste as under the curse of God, still you cannot but feel, that there he once dwelt by his special presence; there was published the revelation on which we rest our immortal hopes; there were first proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation, and from thence went forth the glorious truth which is finally to enlighten and bless all mankind, and to which, even now, the greatest nations upon earth trace their civilization, their freedom, their knowledge and happiness.

These circumstances will always make Palestine a centre-point of deep and instructive interest, and that, whether to the philosopher, the statesman or the christian.

For myself, I must say, that I feel deeply grateful to God, that I have been permitted to make even a short sojourn in that land; and though the recollection of the past, especially as connected with one painful event, brings over my spirit a

feeling of sadness, "as of a bright vision that has passed away forever," I love to cherish in my memory the sacred impressions deposited there by my visit, and they will, I trust, be useful to me while I live and forever.

1. In order to impart to you some of these impressions, I will speak, first, of the great and painful contrast, which the traveler every where observes, between what Palestine once was, and what it now is. It is represented in the Scriptures,—running back to an early period in its history,—as a good land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the glory of all lands. And from various other similar expressions in the Bible, it is evident, that the holy land, as it is called, was once greatly distinguished by its fertility, and by the variety and abundance of its productions.

But the Scriptures are not alone in testifying to this fact. In passing through the land, the traveler is every where met with evidence the most convincing, that it was once filled with a vast population, and afforded, in abundance, the means of subsistence and of happiness. He sees this evidence in the thickly scattered towns and

villages now in ruins; in the extensive and crowded burying grounds, near to which no human being now resides; in the fallen terraces that once lined the sides of the hills and mountains to their very tops, and in the rich plains and valleys which, uncultivated, still pour forth their natural products in wild, luxurious profusion. In traveling from Beirût to Sidon and Tyre, I observed, most of the way, an old Roman road, now in ruins, but every where showing, by the deep ruts worn into the massive pavements, that it had for centuries been a great thoroughfare, leading through a rich and thickly peopled country. Sites of ruined towns were numerous; and I often noticed, as I passed along, fallen columns, broken arches, crumbling aqueducts, with here and there a broad court paved with Mosaic, all indicating wealth and luxury, and greatness now no more. The fine plain of ancient Phenicia, stretching to the north of Sidon and running on beyond Tyre, must once have been covered with a dense population; it is now like a garden for fertility, though but little cultivated, and for the most part is left to run to waste. The cities just named, embosomed in these rich coasts, were once the most

magnificent and powerful in the world; their merchants were princes, and their traffickers the honorable of the earth. They are now poor, miserable, dilapidated towns, and seemed scarcely habitable.

Passing from Tyre through the northern parts of Galilee, we saw the most striking marks of ancient fertility and prosperity, where now little else is to be seen but barrenness and desolation. The fine, rich country around the sea of Tiberias, once thickly studded with large towns, the smallest of which, as Josephus informs us, contained 15,000 inhabitants, is now, for the most part, a neglected, unpeopled waste; only two miserable villages appear on the western shore of the lake, Magdalla and Tiberias, and not a single fisher-boat is seen on its waters. The sites of ancient Chorazin and Bethsaida were pointed out to us near the north end of the lake; but the towns themselves can scarcely be said to exist, so poor and dilapidated are the few buildings that remain where, it is supposed, they once stood. As for Capernaum, which was once exalted to heaven, the place is not known where it formerly flourished; the woe pronounced upon it by the Sa-

viour seems long since to have been executed, and it has been thrust down from its elevation to a state of utter ruin and oblivion.

The great plain of Esdraellon too, or Jezreel, stretching from the base of mount Carmel nearly to the shore of the Jordan, exuberantly rich in soil and beautiful in situation, presented, at the time I crossed it in the month of April, little else than a most prolific growth of wild flowers and grass, with only here and there a spot under cultivation. The same may be said of the still more extensive plain of Sharon, and of the fine, rich country situated around what was once the capital of ancient Samaria. In passing over these beautiful parts of the country, you see the most indubitable signs of a former high cultivation and thrift, and of a teeming population, where now are only decay and ruin.

From Samaria towards Jerusalem, the country assumes a still more sterile appearance. The hills and mountains, though once evidently cultivated to their very summits, and clothed with vineyards, fig-trees, pomegranates and olives, now present little else than a mass of naked rock. The terraces, which once supported the soil, are

in ruins; and the mould, as fast as it is formed, is washed down the slopes and nothing remains but rocky barrenness.

Even in the valleys, it is only here and there, that a field is seen in a state of tillage. The country immediately around Jerusalem, especially to the west and north, is the most dreary, barren and waste, I ever beheld. It seems overlaid with immense masses of rocks and stones, with scarcely soil enough to allow any thing to take root and grow. The city itself, once beyond a doubt, the most magnificent and splendid on earth, now presents only a melancholy contrast to its former greatness and glory. You cannot walk about Sion, and go round about her, as of old, and tell the towers thereof, mark her bulwarks and consider her palaces. The city sits solitary and forlorn; forsaken of God and evidently lying under his curse. All who have been in Jerusalem must have felt this. The inhabitants few, and with the exception of the Turks,—if indeed they are an exception,—poor, oppressed and extremely miserable. No suburbs, no surrounding busy population, none of the stir and activity of enterprising life is to be witnessed,

'but only one rude scene of melancholy waste, in the midst of which the ancient glory of Judea bows her widowed head in desolation.' A few goats and sheep, straggling about the rocks which overhang the shattered remains of the village of Siloam; a few swarthy shepherds, plying their listless occupation; with here and there a fierce, armed Bedouin from the surrounding deserts and mountain fastnesses, and now and then a cowled monk or wandering pilgrim steal in upon the picture; and except it be the sound of the muezzin from the minarets, proclaiming the hour of prayer to the followers of the false prophet, you may sit on the hill slopes, on either side, for an hour together, and not hear the vibration of a human voice from that spot, which once echoed to the strains of sacred song, and royal triumph, and national glory, and the busy din and tumult of 2,000,000 of people.

I can pursue no further this painful contrast between the present and past condition of Palestine and the Holy City; between the "goodly land" formerly enriched with "plenty of corn and oil and wine," and this modern territory of desolation and barrenness. In what has been

said, I have wished to show that, though little is now seen but sterility and decay, the physical capabilities of the country are great, and that its present barren, unpeopled condition is the result of divine judgments. No one, it seems to me, can pass through the country, without being convinced, that the curse of God, in fulfilment of his threatening, is stamped on the face of nature, and on all the interests of society. *And thy heaven that is over thy head shall be brass, and the earth that is under thee shall be iron. The Lord shall make the rain of thy land powder and dust; from heaven shall it come down upon thee, until thou be destroyed.* This fearful denunciation has been executed; and the consequences are seen in the sterility, desolation and ruin which every where meet the traveler, as he passes through the land, once favored of God above all other lands.

2. While traveling in Syria and Palestine one can hardly fail to receive a deeper and more vivid impression of *the truthfulness of the Scriptures.* The Holy land is indeed a local commentary on the sacred volume. One who visits that land with the love of the Bible in his heart, and a competent knowledge of its contents in his mind,

will continually meet with illustrations of its geography, history, prophecy, comparisons and images. He will feel that he is in the very land of the Bible; and he will find it the best guide-book he can have. I felt this deeply when in that land, and I often said, either the Bible must be true, or Judea an unreal thing; and all the objects and scenes which there meet the eye must be dreams. Take a position on the lofty hill on which Safet is built, or on any of the high lands around Nazareth, and a vast panorama is spread out to your view, every part of which reminds you of some locality, some historical event, some great transaction recorded in the Scriptures. Mount Hermon raising aloft its snowy head, with the sources of the Jordan and the beautiful vale through which it flows; the sea of Tiberias with its interesting localities, and the mountains of Moab stretching along in the east, like a waving line drawn on the horizon; the mount of Beatitudes where Christ preached to the multitude; Nazareth where he was brought up; Tabor where he was transfigured; Nain where he raised the widow's son to life; Gilboa where Saul was slain; Endor where he went to consult the woman who had a

familiar spirit; Shunem where Elijah restored to life the Shunamite's son; Mount Carmel, rising in the distance, where he usually resided and where he sent his servant to watch the cloud, as it rose from the sea, portending rain; Jezreel, the royal residence of Ahab, and the great plain of the same name, lying below, the scene of many a bloody battle recorded in the Bible;—all these, rich in Scriptural associations, lie spread out before you as on a map; and as you contemplate them, the whole scene of sacred history rises to view with a new and wonderful sense of reality. The same impression I felt, when from the top of Mount Gerizim I looked upon the frowning front of opposite Ebal, and gazed upon the charming piece of ground which Jacob gave to his son Joseph, visited the tomb of this his beloved son, and the well where the Saviour once sat and refreshed himself, wearied with his journey, and traced for many a mile the road he was wont to travel as he went to and from Jerusalem through Samaria. Being on the spot, amid these sacred localities, and seeing how exactly they correspond with the references made to them in the Scriptures, the truth of the inspired volume comes home with

new power to the mind, and impresses itself with a livelier interest on the heart. So, take a position on the top of mount Olivet, and view the scene that spreads around you, and you will seem to hear a thousand voices speaking to you of scriptural events, and giving you a new and deeper impression of their reality. As you leave the city, you pass through St. Stephen's gate, near to which is the Pool of Bethesda; you descend into the valley of Jehoshaphat, cross the brook Kedron and tread the same road that was wont to be traveled by the Saviour and his Apostles, and up which he was led to the hall of Pilate on his way to trial. You enter the garden of Gethsemane, the place of his last agony, and muse with deep emotion on the scenes of that dreadful night. You reach the summit of the mount and near by, a little to the east, is the place whence the Saviour ascended to glory, in the presence of his disciples; a little further on is Bethany, the village of Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary; at your right is the road leading down to Jericho, winding round among the hills and valleys, till it loses itself in the dark, gloomy wilderness of the Saviour's

temptation; beyond which is seen the Dead Sea, with all its solemn and affecting associations. At the south-west, distant some seven or eight miles, is Bethlehem, the place of our Lord's birth, hanging upon the slope of a lofty hill, and presenting a fine view of the church of the nativity. Beneath you, at the western base of the mount, winds the deep valley of Jehoshaphat, and on the opposite hill lies spread out before you the Holy City; and as you gaze upon the scene, the 'tide of sacred history flows massively through the soul,' and the events of ages, as connected with this spot, pass in rapid review before the mind. There is the site of the once joyous city, the city that was full of people, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth; the place of kings and heaven's inspired messengers; the place of the visions of God, and of the ministries of angels; over which the Saviour wept as he descended, for the last time, from this lovely mount; where he taught, and wrought miracles, was condemned and crucified and rose from the dead. Absorbed in contemplating the past, and beholding the present poor, degraded condition of the city; the site of the glorious temple, now occupied by the

dark, unseemly mosque of Omar, and signs of desolation and ruin on every side, you seem to hear afresh, the voice of the Saviour, as weeping, he uttered the prophetic words,—if thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round and keep thee in on every side; and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the day of thy visitation.

Indeed one cannot pass through Syria and Palestine, without meeting every where with objects to remind him of the truth of God in his word. There prophecy was uttered by seers of old, and there prophecy has had its awful fulfilment. The naked rocks, the deserted plains, the wasted villages and ruined towns, the whole sterile, desolate aspect of the country are but a faithful commentary on the declarations of the Bible, forewarning of judgments that should come in punishment of idolatry and sin.

While Tyre was yet in her glory, the proud mistress of the seas, and holding commerce with all the then known world, God said, by the prophet Ezekiel, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and I will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth the waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers; *I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her like the top of a rock. It shall be a place for the spreading af nets in the midst of the sea;* for I have spoken it saith the Lord God, and it shall become a spoil to the nations." Standing on the spot, I felt deeply how literally this threatening had been executed. Tyre has indeed become like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon. Old Tyre formerly stood on the main land. The ruins of this great and proud city were used by Alexander the Great, 332 years before Christ, to fill up an arm of the sea, and thus construct a mole or isthmus to enable him to press the seige against modern Tyre, then situated on an island, and thus was literally fulfilled the word of prophecy—For thus saith the Lord God, when I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when

I shall bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall overflow thee, I will make thee a terror and thou shalt be no more. Tyre is thus, as it were,* a permanent living witness to the truth of God, a "hoary monitor, speaking forth from its desolation to us and to men of all ages and climes."

From these brief notices, you will easily see how it is, that one, passing through the lands of the East, gets a new and more vivid impression of the truthfulness of the Scriptures. He feels himself to be in the home of the Scriptures; amid the very objects and scenes which they describe, and from which they draw their illustrations and images. There are the localities with which are connected our deepest and most interesting scriptural associations. There are the vines and the fig-trees and the olives, and the cattle on a thousand hills; the same fruits, flowers, birds, animals, and modes of living, that were common four thousand years ago. 'Near every village there are caves, and cisterns, and sepulchres cut in the rock; women, generally two together, grinding at the mill; holding the distaff, and

* Read Isaiah xxiii. and Ezekiel xxvi. xxvii. xxviii.

spinning; oxen treading out the corn, groups of females seated near a well, or drawing water for their flocks; shepherds abiding in the fields; the bottles of the people are made of leather; their beds are a simple mat or carpet, and even a child may take them up and walk; the grass is cast into the oven, people live in the tombs, there are lodges in the gardens of cucumbers, grass grows upon the tops of the houses, and the inhabitants walk and sleep upon the roofs of their dwellings; the wheel is seen turning at the fountain and the vessels or pitchers connected with it may be broken.' These customs, and a multitude of others that might be named, are often referred to in the Scriptures, and seeing them on the very ground where the Scriptures were written, imparts to them a freshness and reality not to be felt in any other situation. The Bible, many parts of it, at least, appears to me like a new book. I read it with a livelier interest, since my eyes have rested on many of the objects and scenes which it describes; and while the articles of my faith have none of them been changed by what I have seen, I trust that all of them have a

deeper place in my affections and a stronger hold on my mind. But,

3. I must now present a view of this subject somewhat different. The impressions made on the mind by visiting Palestine are not all favorable to spiritual affections, or to the strengthening of our faith. Some imagine, that to look with the bodily eyes upon the exact spots, where the great events recorded in the Scriptures occurred, must of course produce a powerful spiritual effect on the mind. Hence, thousands of pilgrims every year, visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land. They come from Egypt, from all parts of Syria, and Asia Minor, from Armenia, from Greece, from Turkey, from the provinces of the Danube, and from the distant parts of Persia. It is the great object of life, with many, to obtain property enough to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. But very few, it is believed, are made better by the tour, while many, it is known, are made worse. The fact is, local associations are insufficient, of themselves, to awaken spiritual feelings. The heart that is cold, while studying the Scriptures, in retirement, or surrounded by christian ordinances in a christian land, is not likely to

glow with any kindling warmth, even on the mount of Beatitudes, or in the garden of Gethsemane. Much depends on the state of mind which one carries with him in visiting sacred places. He, who goes to Jerusalem with little faith, will not be likely to return with much. I can easily imagine, that a worldly minded man, or a man having but little knowledge of the Scriptures, and no settled faith in God, might be made a sceptic and an infidel by visiting Palestine, and especially Jerusalem, with all its miserable superstitions and mummeries. This, we know, has often been the effect of a visit to Rome; and would, I think, in many cases, be the effect of a visit to the Holy City,—there is so much there that is anti-christian and abominable, so much to displease and disgust. I often felt, when traveling in the East, particularly in Syria and the Holy Land, that if I could not have access to the Bible, to guide and assist my faith, I should certainly become an unbeliever, so mean, so degraded, so unintelligent and worthless did nearly all that is there called christianity, religion, appear to me. In that land of superstition and ignorance, one needs both the power and the disposi-

tion to separate the gold from the dross, the precious from the vile ; and if he lacks this, he will be much exposed to throw away all as dross, all as vile.

It is to be observed, further, that persons, of different constitutional temperaments, will be affected differently, by the objects presented to view in the Holy Land. Those of a warm, imaginative turn, or who are chiefly wrought upon, through the medium of the senses, may have their feelings strongly excited by visiting the sacred places in and around Jerusalem. They may kiss, with great ardor, the various objects which are pointed out to them as holy ; may weep abundantly, as they kneel by the spot where the cross was fixed, and be convulsed with emotion as they embrace the tomb of the Virgin Mary, or pay their devotions in the church of the Holy sepulchre ; and yet all this while they know nothing of spiritual christianity, be as much the servants of sin as ever, and as little meet for heaven. This is often the case ; and hence in Roman Catholic churches, and the same is true of the churches of the East, there is frequently manifested a great deal of emotion where there is no

religion. It is all feeling, all emotion, nothing else.

On the contrary, persons who are of a calm, reflective cast of mind, and whose feelings are excited rather through the understanding and conscience, than by outward, visible signs, may visit the Holy City and the various sacred localities in the Holy Land, and be interested, and, perhaps, profited; and yet they will be likely to have no strong feelings, no deep emotions. Many are disappointed in this respect, and wonder how they can view objects, accounted so sacred and so important, with so little feeling. The truth is, the best and most affecting means of grace, to an enlightened, christian mind, are not to be found in viewing saintly relics, or in visiting holy places, or in worshipping even at the reputed shrines of our Lord and of his virgin mother; but in studying the simple Scriptures, in seeking the retirement of the closet, in enjoying the Sabbath with its privileges; in bowing with fellow Christians before the throne of grace, and paying to our common Father an intelligent, spiritual worship.

A distinction is likewise to be made between the different kinds of events of which the Holy

Land has been equally the theatre. Such as are *common*, or fall within the usual range of human observation and experience, we are assisted to realize, more vividly, by being on the spot, where they transpired. But such as are *supernatural*, such as relate to the great spiritualities of our faith, to the wonders of redemption,—events of this kind, we are very little aided to comprehend and feel, by local vision, or by being present at the places where they occurred. For example, when I stood by Jacob's well, and remembered how the Saviour once sat there, wearied with his journey, and held conversation with the woman of Samaria, the whole scene rose to my view with new and deeper impressiveness. So when I passed through the village of Bethany, I thought, with peculiar interest, of the sweet intercourse which our Lord was wont to have with the little, pious family that once resided there. As I looked upon the road leading down to Jericho, dark and terrible as it approached the wilderness, and thought of the man who fell there among thieves, the goodness of the Samaritan and the beauty of the whole narrative never appeared to me in so striking and impressive a light. And when,

passing along the road that leads from Bethany to Jerusalem, around the southern slope of the Mount of Olives, I came near to the spot where Jesus beheld the city and wept over it, the whole transaction seemed present to my mind, and I mingled in the tender, solemn scene, with deep emotion. These, and other events like them, gather a new and more impressive interest in our view, from having the localities before us with which they are connected. But when we come to the deeper and more spiritual parts of our religion, to the great transactions connected with our redemption, the birth of Christ in a stable, his temptation in the wilderness, his agony in the garden, his crucifixion, his resurrection, his ascension,—here localities are of very little use. These are mysteries too sacred, too sublime to be understood or felt, through the medium of the senses. They are to be apprehended and brought home to the mind, in their true spiritual impressiveness, only by faith, by calm reflection and prayer. Indeed, I often felt while traveling in Palestine, that local associations tended to throw a hurtful materialism around my most spiritual views of divine things; I frequently had to resist this influence

by calling in my thoughts from the sensible to the spiritual, and I feel quite sure that, in so far as deep impressions of great, spiritual truths are concerned, the pilgrim to the Holy Land has no advantage over him who remains at home, and makes a right use of his Bible and his Sabbaths.

It was my privilege, while in Jerusalem, to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper with several christian friends. It was in an upper room, at the same season of the year when the Saviour instituted the ordinance, near the place where he partook of it with his disciples, within sight of the spot where he suffered and died, and of the mount whence he ascended to heaven. It may be thought, that these circumstances must have imparted a deep and most impressive interest to the occasion. It was indeed interesting; it could not be otherwise. Still I can say with truth, that often here at home, I have been much more deeply impressed by the ordinance, and have derived from it much greater spiritual benefit. The local associations distracted my mind, and drew my thoughts away from those spiritual views of the ordinance, which are

essential to its producing its deepest and best effect on the heart

It is impossible, moreover, to visit Jerusalem and the Holy Land, without being continually oppressed with most painful and sorrowful reflections. You feel, wherever you go, that the city and the land are under the dreadful curse of God. The whole country exhibits a most melancholy contrast to what it once was, and to what it might now have been, but for the sins of those who once dwelt there. The threatenings of God have been executed, and the whole land lies desolate and in ruins.

The city, which, it is said, once contained more than two millions of people, and for magnificence and splendor, was unsurpassed by any other on earth, is now reduced to some sixteen or seventeen thousand souls, Turks, Arabs, Jews, and a motley mixture from many other nations, most of them extremely poor and miserable, dwelling in rude stone buildings, and subsisting on means one knows not what. Then for religion, alas! well nigh every name and form of it is there an abomination. Painful as it was to hear the cry of the muezzin, calling the followers of the false

prophet to their devotions, on the spot where once the thousands of Israel were wont to shout forth the praises of God, and worship him in the glorious temple filled with his presence, I could not but feel, that even such a cry and such devotions were, to say the least, not more irrational, impious, and offensive to Jehovah, than what is daily exhibited, under the name of religion, in the church of the Holy Sepulchre. I was present on "the great, or Easter Saturday," and witnessed what is called the miracle of the holy fire. I cannot describe the scene. Imagine some three or four thousand pilgrims, with every variety of costume, and some with almost no costume at all, assembled and densely crowded together in the immense area of the church, all excited to the most intense fanaticism, in expectation of seeing the heaven-descended flame, issue from holes in the sides of the sepulchre. Turkish soldiers were stationed in different parts of the church, with bayoneted muskets; and officers full armed, carrying likewise large sticks or canes, which they frequently had occasion to use, and with great violence, in beating groups of quarreling pilgrims into order. One can have no idea of the excesses

there practiced, without witnessing them. It was awful. Laughing, singing, fighting, shouting, jumping, clapping of hands, and dancing, succeeded each other, or were carried on all at once in different quarters of the church. I thought of the furies, of the wild orgies of pagans at their idolatrous feasts, but I can find no comparison rightly to represent it.

The Greek bishop of Jerusalem, the principal actor in this stupendous farce, accompanied by a priest, at length appeared, preceded by a Turkish guard, entered the sepulchre and the door was closed. In about half an hour, the miracle workers sent forth the celestial fire through the apertures before named; the maddened multitude sent forth a shout like that of bachanals, and rushed forward to light their torches at the holy fire, which they say will not burn, and in a few minutes the whole church was in a blaze of light. As I witnessed this shocking scene, the insults offered to the majesty of God within the church dedicated to his worship, and by priests bearing the holy name of the Saviour, I could not but fear and tremble, lest the judgments of

heaven should break forth instantly against such barefaced imposture and wickedness.*

* The sepulchre is an oblong marble structure, perhaps fifteen feet in length by eight in breadth, and twelve or fifteen in height, It is divided into two apartments, in the innermost of which is what is represented to be the real tomb of the Saviour, covered with a marble slab, raised some two feet above the floor. This sepulchre, or mausoleum stands in the centre of a large circular church, surmounted by a lofty dome. As the church has no windows, the dome is the only avenue through which light is admitted, and being open, or only covered with strong wire gauze work, it serves well the purposes of ventilation. The front of the sepulchre, which is towards the east, is gorgeously ornamented with gold and silver lamps, and various costly offerings made by pilgrims, who, in successive ages, have gone there to perform their devotions.

It seems probable, that the miracle of the "holy fire," did not originate at Jerusalem, but at Poitiers, in France, about the year 569. In a church built there by the queen of France, the wife of Clotaire, among other miracles said to have been performed in it, was that of a light supernaturally produced on Good Friday, annually, two days before Easter. In the year 870, the "holy light" is first heard of as being at Jerusalem. It is very probable, as Coray, a celebraled Greek writer suggests, that the miracle was either invented some time previous, or transferred from Poitiers to the sepulchre at Jerusalem, for the purpose of attracting pilgrims, who, on account of Mohammedan persecutions, were deterred from making the pilgrimage. At this time the "holy light" was in the hands of the Roman Catholics, who retained the choice possession, the power of working

But besides the grosser forms of superstition and wickedness just referred to, there are numerous other things, in and around Jerusalem, which are exceedingly annoying to a christian traveler, and can hardly fail to excite his deep indignation and grief. He feels himself to be in the midst of lying legends, and foolish traditions, and degrading superstitions. They meet him on every side; the very atmosphere seems poisoned with them. By far the greater part of the objects and places which are pointed out as sacred, are the mere inventions of stupid monks, or the creations of superstitious credulity. There is no reason to believe, that even the church of the Holy Sepulchre stands on the spot of the crucifixion and burial of

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this annual miracle, for about three hundred years. When Jerusalem was taken from the Crusaders, by the Saracens, under Saladin, in 1187, he gave the Church of the Sepulchre to the Greeks, who have retained it ever since, and have yearly exhibited the impious farce of this pretended miracle. The Catholics now mock at it, as a gross imposition, though it is certain that they practiced it, annually, for at least three centuries, and regarded it as the seal of heaven on their church. For the last six hundred years or more, the Greeks, by favor of their Mohammedan rulers, have enjoyed the same monopoly, and of course believe that they have equally the divine sanction to their orthodoxy.

our Lord. And yet within that church are comprised almost all the spots associated with the last days of our Saviour. They show you the place where he stood and wept, the pillar by which he was scourged, the spot where he was crowned with thorns, the hill of Calvary, up some fourteen or fifteen stairs, where he was crucified, the stone on which his body was anointed, the tomb where he was laid, the cleft made in the rock by the earthquake, from which Adam's skull was taken, the very place where the wood of the cross was found by the Empress Hellena, and the exact point where is the centre of the world. And if you pass out of the city to the mount of Olives, you are shown, in the church of the ascension, the precise spot whence he ascended, with the print of his feet and of his staff in the rock. The pilgrims regard these things with great veneration ; to visit them, to kneel by them, and kiss them, is in their view the highest act of religion, and the surest way to obtain salvation.

The enlightened christian grieves to witness such degrading superstition and ignorance. He is pained to see how christianity, there in the cradle of its birth, and on the spot of its earliest

and brightest triumphs, is desecrated, debased, crushed down and destroyed; and while he embraces the New Testament to his bosom with a warmer faith and a more grateful love, as showing to him a more excellent way, the exclamation bursts, involuntarily, from his lips,—how long, O Lord, how long shall these desolations continue!

From the high land, some two or three miles west of the Jaffa gate, I took my last look of Jerusalem. The mount of Olives still lingered awhile longer in sight. I gazed upon that with indescribable emotion, till the little church on its summit faded from my vision; then I turned and went away in silence, breathing to heaven the prayer, that when my pilgrimage on earth shall be ended, though oceans and continents may separate me from the place of my Saviour's humiliation and triumph, I may find his presence with me, and be accounted worthy to ascend, and dwell eternally with him in the world of glory.

4. To one who has visited the Holy Land, or who feels any concern for the prosperity of the Redeemer's kingdom, it is a question of deep interest, what is to be the future condition of that

land, and of the city which was once its capital, the place of sacred solemnities, and of God's especial presence? Time will not now permit a discussion of this question. There are those who believe that Palestine is ere long to rise from its present desolations, and Jerusalem to assume more than its ancient glory; that the land is again to be peopled by the descendants of those, who once owned and cultivated the soil, and that the Holy City, no longer held under Moslem rule, or trodden down of the gentiles, is to be rebuilt, in magnificence and splendor; is to be graced with the presence of her King, and resound with his most worthy praise. It may be so. I express no opinion on this subject. Judging from the present aspect of Syria and Palestine, it is not improbable that the Jews, in large numbers, may yet go back and dwell there. This is the confident expectation of the great body of the nation, and they believe the time is near. The land, in so far as occupancy is concerned, is open to receive them. Its capability to sustain a great population cannot be questioned. And should the yoke of Turkish oppression, under which the country now groans, be broken, and a wise, stable

government be established there, by some christian power,—England for example,—the descendants of Israel, there can be no doubt, would be seen flocking there from all parts of the world where they are now scattered, and thus the land be again filled by its rightful owners.

However this may be, one thing is certain, Syria and Palestine are destined soon to experience great changes, and they will be changes, we may be sure, for the better. The Turkish reign there is very feeble and very precarious. Indeed the whole Turkish empire is tottering to its fall. It is held up for a time by the jealousy of European powers; but its fall and dismemberment, at no distant day, is certain. That day may come at any time; and when it comes, salvation, I believe, will come to the land of God's ancient people, and they will probably return, many of them at least, to resume the heritage of their fathers.

But we must wait the development of God's purposes; his providence will ere long unroll the book of destiny, and show what scenes are to rise over the land of patriarchs and prophets, and of apostles and martyrs. I deem it a high privilege

to have been in that land. My memory loves to retrace the steps of my travel, and call up the various scenes through which I there passed. To have presented to you this brief, imperfect sketch of them, has renewed to me, at least for a season, the pleasure I felt in actual vision; and if the service thus performed do but prove the occasion of strengthening your faith in God and his word, and awakening in you a warmer gratitude for the richer blessings that distinguish your lot, then will I give thanks to the Father of mercies, both on your account and my own; and daily shall it be my prayer, that pastor and people may so pursue their pilgrimage here below, that they shall enter together the New Jerusalem, that city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God.

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